

DAMAGE BOOK

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY

OU_216390

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY

OSMANIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Call No. 923.5/G669B. Accession No. 20785

Author Bloo Ryan

Title Goring, the iron man of Gresham

This book should be returned on or before the date last marked below.

GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

by
H. W. BLOOD-RYAN

LONDON
JOHN  LONG
Limited

First published 1938
Reprinted 1938
Cheap Edition 1939

Made and Printed in Great Britain for John Long, Limited,
34, 35, and 36, Paternoster Row, London, E.C.4, at *The*
Mayflower Press, Plymouth. William Brendon & Son, Ltd.

CONTENTS

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

page 9

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

page 13

PHASE ONE

UNDER THE BLACK EAGLE

1893-1918

page 23

PHASE TWO

THE SHADOW OF THE HAMMER AND SICKLE

1918-1933

page 58

PHASE THREE

THE CROOKED CROSS

1933—

page 180

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

FIELD-MARSHAL GÖRING AND THE AUTHOR, BERLIN, MAY 1933	<i>Frontispiece</i>
	FACING PAGE
GÖRING PHOTOGRAPHED AS LEADER OF THE S.A. ON THE EVE OF 8 November 1923	86
AN EARLY GROUP OF THE THIRD REICH	87
GÖRING AND VON PAPEN DURING THEIR VISIT TO ROME, 1933	87
AT THE CHRISTENING OF THE SUPER-AIR-LINER D2500 (FIELD-MARSHAL VON HINDENBURG)	182
GÖRING ADDRESSING THE COURT AT THE REICHSSTAG FIRE TRIAL, SUPREME COURT, LEIPZIG, 1933	183
A CHRISTMAS PARTY GIVEN TO THE FOREIGN PRESS AND DIPLOMATIC CORPS IN BERLIN	200
GÖRING TRIES HIS HAND AT ARCHERY JUST AFTER HIS INSTALLATION AS MASTER OF THE FORESTS	201
GÖRING WITH PRINCE OSCAR OF PRUSSIA AT THE BERLIN HORSE SHOW, 1933	201
THE REMAINS OF CARIN GÖRING BEFORE FINAL INTERMENT AT CARINHALL, SCHORFHEIDE, 1934	228
GÖRING, ROEHM AND HITLER PHOTOGRAPHED IN THE MOUNTAINS DURING THE DIFFICULT DAYS LEADING UP TO THE NOW-FAMOUS PURGE OF 30 JUNE 1934	229
GÖRING LEAVING BERLIN CATHEDRAL AFTER HIS WEDDING TO EMILY SONNEMANN, 1935	244
IN JOVIAL MOOD WITH AIR FORCE RANK AND FILE	245
PRESIDING AT HIS ANNUAL CHRISTMAS TREAT FOR BERLIN CHILDREN	245
GÖRING WITH SIR NEVILLE HENDERSON, THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR, AT THE FESTIVAL OF ST. HUBERT, THE PATRON SAINT OF HUNTING	254

	FACING PAGE
GÖRING AS A HUNTSMAN WITH HIS KILL	254
GÖRING AND HIS WIFE ATTENDING THE FUNERAL OF HIS FATHER- IN-LAW IN HAMBURG, NOVEMBER 1936	255
GÖRING SALUTING AFTER UNVEILING THE MEMORIAL TO MANFRED VON RICHTHOFEN	274
TURNING THE FIRST SOD OF THE NEW HYDRO-ELECTRIC PLANT AT ZELL-AM-ZEE DURING HIS TRIUMPHAL VISIT TO AUSTRIA, MAY 1938	275

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THE personality of Field-Marshal Hermann Göring has come to be considered by millions of Englishmen as being that of a grotesque play-acting comedian, due largely to ability with the pencil shown by several of our leading cartoonists, who, because they are not too concerned with the import of this man's entry into world politics, see in his rather portly figure a cause for ridicule. Students of cause and effect in world affairs have doubtless already espied in what has become known of him via the columns of the more sober journals, a power for good or for evil in his country's relations with the British Empire ; in him reposes the ruthlessness of the Prussian-trained officer, the bluntness of one who was born on the land, the daring of the airman, a firmer grasp of foreign affairs than is commonly supposed, the faculty of engendering blind and unswerving devotion from 99 per cent of the German people, an aptitude for negotiation and the ability to get things done.

Göring is possessed by no unnatural bitterness towards England for the rôle played by her during the Great War, and his speeches, in common with those of Adolf Hitler, under the closest scrutiny, fail to disclose any direct attack upon, or mention of, England as a potential enemy of Germany ; but, true to type, he is intolerant and suspicious of the dissembling of Britain's politicians. He admires a firm front in a rival or adversary and his war record proves that he can be a staunch friend or an implacable foe. Only the passage of time will disclose in which role events cause him to appear before the British people.

There is yet time for an honourable understanding to be arrived at between his country and ours, but the sands are running out and my personal observations force me to the painful conclusion that time is on the side of Germany. Through the vacillation of British policy, Britain is losing respect and friendship of other nations, and Germany, by the exercise of objective, if debatable, methods, is accumulating respect and material support (if not real friendship) from unexpected quarters—from countries which hitherto looked traditionally to England for guidance and commercial co-operation, the result of which will be thrown down in the scales of coming events against us until, if care be not taken, and our Government is not led by a strong personality, we shall find ourselves completely alone in an indifferent or perhaps an unfriendly world.

An attempt is made in this book to throw light upon many phases of Göring's life ; privations, ignominy, exile and confiscation of personal property in the past have all contributed to the formation of a hard and dominant character and their impingement upon his nature have doubtless brought about much that is arbitrary in him.

Much of the information in the text has been made available through the kindness of many of his war-time colleagues, several of the Secretaries of State in the Third Reich and a one-time high official of the Nazi party, who, for reasons best known to himself and to the party, no longer enjoys the confidence of his Government and who is now resident outside the Reich, while my own warrant to undertake the present work is justified by a knowledge of Germany and its people, gained in long years of residence under conditions favourable to the formation of considered judgments.

During the early days of 1933 political power came to many in the Hitler movement as a surprise and as a

strange and unexperienced sensation, the enjoyment of which upset the sense of proportion of many, and during the past five years a succession of purges has so divided my informants in Germany that I am placed in the unhappy position of wondering whether they will be in such hearty agreement with the text now as at the time some of the facts (which I have checked and cross-checked) were made available by them when they, individually, regardless of the camp to which they now give allegiance, enjoyed the complete confidence of Hitler, Göring, and the whole Nazi movement.

Human nature in its frailty is invariably inclined to go back upon admiration expressed, or information given, at a time when the prevailing wind is favourable to a certain course, but be that as it may, facts are facts, and while I personally have suffered considerable financial hardship in my dealings with German cultural and business organizations since 1933, due to the bad faith of individual Germans (who had low numbers in the party and whose swindling proclivities could, and should, have been controlled by the appropriate State departments), I yet retain an understanding of the German problem and have ventured to write about a German who to the German Nation must appear to be great, and who to other nations must represent a portent of a resurgent Germany.

H. W. BLOOD-RYAN.

WARSAW,

June 1938.

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

TO comprehend to the full the meteoric rise to power and fame of Hermann Göring in the Third Reich some understanding, historically and psychologically, of the German people and of the several centuries of accumulated causes which gave to the movement, of which he is the standard-bearer, the opportunity to seize and, finally, to hold, the power of government over the German people is vitally necessary, because he may be said to be the direct outcome of these centuries of causes and he is most definitely the embodiment of the strivings and, hitherto unfulfilled, hopes of the German people—a fervent desire that has struggled for expression in their music, literature, and in the ambitions of their leaders so far denied them—the prospect of a great united German Nation. An insight into the mental processes of the German is also essential to some understanding of the ruthless, yet kindly, personality into whose hands real active leadership of the Third Reich may, at any time, be expected to fall. In fact, this understanding arrived at, the explanation of Göring becomes simply that he is to them the twentieth-century hero of German legend and song—the Lohengrin of the Third Reich. This does not mean that Göring will attempt to usurp, by any form of *coup d'état*, the position held by Adolf Hitler, but that Hitler will become ultimately the dignified head of the finally consolidated German Reich—*Gross Deutschland*—leaving the actual executive in the hands of the only man in whom he can repose to the full his confidence and into whose care the direction of the

German State (from the German point of view) could be safely entrusted.

Hermann Göring is the only man, apart from Hitler, in the Nazi movement who is seriously intent upon the real rebirth of a powerful Germany, without taking primary regard to his own financial reward; the inner history of the National Socialist movement discloses that, because of his blind following of Hitler since 1923, he has suffered, physically and financially, more than any other German leader in the struggle for the rise to European supremacy of the new Germany, and, indubitably, his presence inside the movement in the past attracted large financial backing, the militant and propaganda use of which has made the Third Reich *de facto*.

From time to time there appears in the non-German Press news items to the effect that 'The quarrel between Hitler and Göring has become more acute,' or that 'Hitler is attempting to seize upon some excuse to have Göring arrested by the Gestapo,' or that 'An attempt by Göring and his faction to overthrow Hitler was frustrated by Himmler and Goebbels,' all of which is nonsensical in the extreme, as those few foreigners who really know the German situation can aver. That internal dissension is rife in Germany is an actual fact, but the dissenting factions are the 'Little Hitlers,' the beggars on horseback who thought that in 1933 the golden age had come and who ever since have shown their impatience of the time taken for the fulfilment of the official programme of the N.S.D.A.P. which has now been cast into limbo, because Hitler and his intimates, headed by Göring, now see it to be impossible of performance; they see that the promise to sweep away capitalism, contained in the programme which attracted millions to Hitler's banner from the Socialist movement, cannot be kept, due largely, of course, to the fact that capitalists as a class are essential to a heavy rearmament programme, to a policy of national

self-sufficiency, and for the reorganization of the new lands which, whether in Europe or elsewhere, Germany undoubtedly means to possess by hook or by crook. In short, there is a large body of opinion in Germany composed of working, middle, and upper classes who are impatient of time's delay, on the one hand, and who are afraid of the rapidly increasing encroachment on their sacred landed rights, on the other. Socialization is not proceeding quickly enough for the lowest strata of German humanity, price control aggravates the middle classes, and, to their *bourgeois* philosophy, robs them of their true profits, while the upper classes are contemptuous of those non-Junker stalwarts in the Nazi party to whom Hitler has given high office and, consequently, power.

Göring belongs to none of these sections ; his promotion to the highest rank of his country's armed forces, his many key offices of State—all go to prove his loyalty to the head of the German State, and, in turn, is very tangible evidence of Hitler's regard for Göring. After all, the head of a State does not laden a Minister whom he suspects of intrigue against his person and position with higher office and honours, the better to enable him to conspire with greater ease and safety against him. Göring himself has said, when speaking of Hitler : " For more than a decade I have stood at his side and every day I spend with him is a new experience. From the first moment that I saw and heard him I belonged to him body and soul, and . . . I pledged myself to his service and have followed him unswervingly. I have received many honours and titles, but no title or honour has so filled me with pride as the title which the German people have given me—The most loyal lieutenant of our leader."

These words express most aptly the relationship of Göring to the Führer. For sixteen or more years he has followed Hitler's changing fortunes, through adversity,

ridicule, and even technical imprisonment and exile, with unstinted loyalty, even to the point of neglecting, when the interest of the party became urgent, in the cause of his country, his delicate first wife, Carin, of whom it may be truly said that she was a sacrifice offered up on the altar of resurgent Germany. This same unquestioned loyalty will be given to Hitler to the end. That same blind loyalty is also given to Göring by Hitler, and the nature of this blunt, jovial, and intense German patriot is such that Hitler's confidence and esteem sustains him in his various and arduous tasks. Come what may, attacks from without or intrigues from within Nazi councils, nothing can touch him.

.

The history of Germany is one of wars, cruel wars waged more often among and against the German-speaking peoples rather than with and against outsiders—for one cannot, in history, regard Austrians, Bohemians, and the inhabitants of Alsace-Lorraine as other than of German blood and early tradition. Since the dawn of European history we find tribe fighting against tribe until the system of petty kingship grew up and kings fought with, for, or against kings, for money, power, and expansion, using in the task the lords and their followers as tools, the latter more often than not being let out on hire; and, consequently, Germany, or rather that conglomeration of kingdoms and principalities speaking German and following a culture which was wholly Germanic, became the point of intersection of all racial highways. Indeed, the peoples of the continent of Europe seemed driven in upon them by a kind of internal gravity; Slavs, Tartars, Turks, Latins, and the Baltic races.

Because of this migration and invasion of all races to and across what is now Germany, because of the conse-

quent pillaging and rapine that followed in the wake of these other races, the German tribes and, later, people, became obsessed with a fear of invasion from the peoples who had seemingly ringed them around, and there was thrown up two dominant characteristics, which, deep down, have remained rooted in the spirit of the German people of to-day—bravery and inferiority. Bravery being a relic of the days when every man, woman, and child had to bear arms to repel the invader, and inferiority imbued in them through the centuries by the thought that German lands were never to be freed from alien possession and domination. German music is an outstanding example of that paradoxical mixture of valour and hopelessness. Here, also, is the key to the fundamental fear of the ‘encirclement complex’ of the Bismarckian epoch and of the Third Reich.

Always the Germans have looked for a deliverer, and from time to time leaders have arisen who, temporarily, have led them, as Moses led Israel, out of their wilderness of bondage ; which, it must be admitted, was often more mental than physical. These leaders have conjured up the dormant bravery of the Germanic people, and, for a while, administered the State, in its then present form, in a fairly efficient manner. Usually, at the death of these leaders, none were found capable of stepping into their shoes in any adequate fashion, and the German race became subjected again to the tribulations of which their literature and music complains.

Through two thousand years the German people have been vouchsafed only six or seven real leaders ; never has destiny bestowed an honest dynastic leadership upon this admirable race, from which European culture has taken so much and to which it is prepared to give so much when it can be assured of stability and peaceful co-operation of its leaders.

The Hohenstaufen, Frederick the Red Beard (Friedrich

Barbarossa), has been said by history to have revived the ancient kingly authority of Charlemagne. Posterity has said that his reign may be regarded as 'the epitome of the glory of Empire.' Be that as it may, his four decades of kingship enabled the mass of Frederick's subjects to find their way into some form of Europeanism, under the martial, yet benevolent, guidance of his leadership, a leadership in which most classes of the Germans found the embodiment of their individual ideals. From then onwards the power of the people increased, accompanied by a decline in the need for autonomous kingship. In each German kingdom and principality, as the years went by, the hereditary ruler had perforce to yield to the ever-increasing demands of the barons and burghers. All this was accompanied by a disintegration of the Empire and the rise of the alien Hohenzollern from South-West Germany, in what was to become Prussia.

For several centuries the Hohenzollern consolidated Prussia, adding pieces here and there, one arrogating to himself the kingly title in the face of the Emperor's disapproval. Then came Frederick the Great—the war-like philosopher king—great by the Grace of God and the timely help of the English army; and with his passing went the last of the great German hereditary rulers. Already the shadow of the guillotine was casting itself across Europe, and autocrats had of necessity to mend their ways or make way for the thinkers—a breed new to kings. Democracy was on the march, and in the place of emperors and kings were to step the Liberators—Stein, Scharnhorst, Gneisenau, Arndt, Fichte, Körner and the like; and in sympathy with democratic movements abroad the rebellious spirits in Germany, having the same ideas in common, were drawn closer together. The more the Governments of the various German States put obstacles in the way of this working for a consolidated democratic fatherland, the greater became the people's

enthusiasm for a form of neo-Hellenism, and found expression in song :

‘ Up then, from slavery’s chains,
From dungeons dank and bare,
On wings of liberty
Up into life’s free air ! ’

which crept into German use from Greece, and which the Governments had good reason for suppressing. Then followed a generation expressing bitter indignation over the national dismemberment, social misery, and illiberality of the Governments. While the people’s leaders poured scorn in speech and song upon the splendour of the princes :

‘ Germans ! trust the men who see,
Iron will our present be,
Clashing steel our future part :
Now black death is all our earning,
Fairy gold to dust returning :
And our red, our bleeding heart.’

The songs marked the beginning of the spread of hope, mingled with fear, which characterizes present-day Germany. Out of misfortune the German found hope. When Hamburg was practically burned to the ground, towards the middle of last century, the following song gained popularity :

‘ And so let us hand in hand,
Heart in heart entwine :
Native town and native land
Be our common sign.
So may Hamburg’s fiery blaze
Be the dawn of freedom’s days.’

From this time onward countless numbers of people were flung into prison as political offenders and suspects. Frederick William IV was largely instrumental in bringing about an abatement of persecution and, as far as was possible (he being a prisoner of his own system), opened

many prison doors. This Hohenzollern had the will and the capacity to be great, but, strange as it may seem, on his accession he found himself *de facto*, if not *de jure*, a thing of his advisers. In vain did von Schön address a memorial to the King in Council: 'If we do not use the time we have, and avail ourselves of the good which is in it, and help it to develop, then time will bring its own punishment.' So retribution came to the ruling house of Germany and to its pillars seventy years later. The Emperor William II ran away from his own people, whom he had cheated like some cheap huckster in the marketplace, leaving them at the mercy of all that was bad in their midst.

From 1871 came that period of false greatness to the partially co-ordinated German peoples, tied as they were into a confederation of Empire but still ostensibly self-governing, labouring under a burden of double taxation for the very doubtful privilege of being subject to the supreme Government of the parvenu Reich. From this time forward the industrial 'Barons' found their place in the structure of German society, currying favour with the Ruler, seeking advancements and offices at his hands. Flattered to a point of madness, obsessed by a lust for power and greed for material greatness, this Ruler preferred to listen to and to be urged on by this new race of plutocrats, which saw in a greater Germany, however unstable its grounding, at least a lifetime's self-aggrandisement.

In vain did Bismarck and Bülow advise caution: they themselves, it is true, were men filled with legitimate ambition for their country, but their ambition was tempered by a sense of proportion and a heeding of the decencies in diplomatic intercourse. They, as men of the world, apprised of the reactions of the Great Powers to potential German expansion, advised trimming the sails of the ship of State to prevailing international breezes,

but the captain, arrogant to the point of madness, on each occasion dropped his pilots just at the point where their knowledge of uncharted waterways would have (possibly) brought the ship in dignity over the shallows of international suspicion to the harbour of Peaceful Penetration. The pursuit of this policy of almost child-like ignorance culminated in the European nations awakening on that eventful day in 1914, to find, not the pleasant prospect of a summer's day, but war—and that right on their own particular threshold.

All this, then, is the background of Hermann Göring ; to this legacy of greatness, meanness, and lost opportunity has he succeeded—as the executive of Adolf Hitler, one-time corporal in the Imperial Army of the Hohenzollern and now Führer and Reichskanzler of Gross-Deutschland.

GORING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

PHASE ONE

UNDER THE BLACK EAGLE

1893-1918

HERMANN GÖRING was born on 12 January 1893 at his family's seat in Rosenheim, Bavaria, very near the Austrian frontier, the son of a father who had already served the Bismarckian Empire well, and who was one of a long line which knew the enjoyment of privilege and the exercise of power. The Göring family is an old one, hailing from Westphalia and lower Saxony, and at the time of the young Hermann's birth owned the castles and estates of Veldenstein and Mautendorf. In 1884 the German Colonial Society was founded in Frankfurt and the elder Göring was sent by Bismarck to what later became German South-West Africa, as Reichskommissar to control the settlement of Germans in the territory and to ensure for the growing Empire a place in the African sun. Following upon the scramble for territory by all the European Powers interested in Africa and after considerable and often acrimonious conferences, at which each nation vied with the other in undignified demands and pitiable behaviour, came the Partition of Africa.

24 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

During these hard struggles and weary negotiations Minister Resident Göring won finally for the Reich the Colony of German South-West Africa, being duly appointed its first Governor.

In later years, at home in Southern Germany, enjoying his retirement, he was able to stir the imagination of the boy Hermann with tales of far-off lands, of tropic suns and storms, of mineral wealth below the ground, and of mysterious native customs. Thus at an early age did Hermann Göring envisage the enormous possibilities of expansion of Bismarck's Reich into world history—so much so that he came to build up his own 'Weltanschauung'—little thinking, however, that he was destined to write his own name in German history, enjoying greater powers than Bismarck—Bismarck, the Iron Chancellor who had commissioned his father in the services of the Reich and who consequently had become his idol and invisible mentor.

When not hearkening to tales of far-off South-West Africa young Göring would listen with bated breath to the exploits of the Prussian Army before Sedan, of the war with Austria in '66, and of his father's experiences in those wars, in which he had fought as a cavalry officer. His youth was spent as a normal youngster of his class—school and holidays among the mountains. He attended schools at Fürth and Ansbach, and there took seriously to history, knowledge of which in after-life has proved a useful weapon on political platforms. During the holidays he explored the ancient and rambling castles of his family, Veldenstein, in upper Franconia, and Mautendörf, in the Salzburgian Lungau. What visions were conjured up by contemplation of the age-old walls, the lofty pinnacles and towers, the forbidding keep, the gloomy dungeons, and the high-arched halls we do not know, but obviously their impact upon his young consciousness has left a mark upon his character. Everything about Göring,

the mature man of affairs, points to influence of tradition, and association with an atmosphere of an age-long dead. These castles had witnessed many doughty deeds and unspeakable cruelties, and as the young Hermann explored them more and more, his echoing footsteps called back to life, in his youthful imagination, the pageantry and chivalry of the past, sweating steeds and knights in clinking armour until he saw himself in the van of this knightly array as a twentieth-century Götz von Berlichingen—he of the iron hand.

The boy was ambitious to do great deeds, and year by year he pestered his father to allow him to participate in mountain climbs. Self-assertive at an early age, he desired above all things to prove to his family that he could climb and conquer the heights in the Hoher Tauern range. At last he was allowed to set off on his would-be conquest of the famous 12,000 feet high Grossglockner. The snow-covered peaks beckoned and urged him on. For years he had longed to attack their stately insolence and aloofness and now chance gave him opportunity in the shapes of his brother-in-law and a friend.

Together they started off to make the ascent of this famous mountain from the south-east base, but no! not for Hermann Göring—he must attack the peak by climbing over the more difficult ridge from the north-west. Fearing for the youngster's lack of climbing experience, yet filled with admiration for his pluck, the two older climbers gave way to his demand and in the cold clear mountain dawn they commenced the actual ascent. The axes penetrated the frozen hardness of the steep western wall and step by step, undeterred by loose falling rubble and sometimes fair-sized rocks, they reached the summit of the Teufelshorn, to be received by the full blaze of the new morning sun. To reach the summit of their objective they had to traverse a knife-like ice-ridge which led direct to the iron cross above—their goal. Roped

26 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

together in the loose fashion of the alpine climber the three companions continued upwards, now climbing horseback fashion across the remaining spurs, and Göring experienced, for the first time in his life, danger—with one leg dangling over a sheer drop of 2500 feet above the Teischnitz-Kees, the other one hanging 3000 feet over the terrible glacier of the inner Glockner-Kars. At a time when normal people were thinking of breakfast Göring and his two companions stood on the true summit of the Grossglockner.

On his descent, the brother-in-law, with the cunning of an old hand at the game, slid down the first declivity in an upright position. Göring, a mere tyro at climbing, endeavoured to emulate him. "Hermann! What are you up to?" shouted his comrades in unison. Too late—he lost his foothold on the glassy surface and rushed downwards to almost certain death at terrific velocity. His brother-in-law, quick of hand and eye, manœuvred for position below him, secured himself by his pick, and caught young Hermann as he slid down the mountain side, about to bounce off into the valley below at any moment. The two bodies made impact with terrific violence, but Göring was saved from having his body literally smashed to pulp in the depths below.

At home paternal remonstrances were of little avail, and Göring the schoolboy became Göring the mountaineer.

On another occasion, when climbing one of the needles of the Mont Blanc chain, he had to wedge his right arm into a cleft in the rock-face in order to swing his body over and into it. The weight of his body not unnaturally disjoined his shoulder. Without assistance, and suffering terrible pain, he had to readjust the arm back into his shoulder-joint, and thus bring the knuckle-joint back into the normal position. Impervious to what must have been the gnawing pain, Göring climbed onwards up the main mountains in the chain until he had left behind

many hundreds of feet between him and the summit of the needle that had caused all the trouble.

He was then exactly fifteen years of age.

This last escapade was the breaking-point with his father, who saw that this urge for rarefied atmospheres in his unmanageable boy had to be led into other channels, and it required a corrective which appeared to offer at least a hope of equal excitement. What better place than a Prussian Military Academy, to receive the discipline so essential, thought the elder Göring.

So young Hermann was packed off to the Royal Prussian Cadet Corps in Karlsruhe.

The life of a military cadet in the old Imperial Germany was not, by any stretch of the imagination, a bed of roses. Hardship and discipline, even cruelty, were the order of the day; in no way did it compare with the form of conduct prescribed at Sandhurst or Woolwich. The budding officers of the Imperial German Army had to undergo training so strict and so comfortless as to make the sons of Sparta appear by comparison as leading a pampered life. Indeed, there are cases on record of young cadets who, through shortage of food, maltreatment and exposure to the rigours of hard weather, failed to muster sufficient physical standard to pass into the army with commissions. It was to this type of highly selective institution that Göring was sent, and the hard knocks gained in the mountains proved of value in assisting him to adjust himself to life in the cadet school.

Installed in the cadet academy, he became as popular among his fellow-cadets as he had been with his school-fellows and with his friends in the mountains. 'Ein ganzer Kerl,' they all acclaimed him; or, as we would say: 'A jolly good sort.'

The most able and experienced instructor at the military academy reported on him to his father: 'Fine

28 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

fellow, though difficult. 'The born revolutionary.' However fearful young Göring's people may have been of his recklessness, he did them justice under the firm discipline imposed upon him, and no father could have felt a prouder moment than when the future Minister of the Third Reich left the Cadet Corps bearing with him the highest distinction of the academy: 'Des Kaisers Belobigung' (the Emperor's commendation).

This was the commencement of Göring's military career and the first distinction he collected—the next four years were destined to provide a literal shower of decorations to be received at the hands of his Emperor.

He was commissioned in the 112th Infantry Regiment (Prince Wilhelm's) and, his self-assertiveness marking him out for natural leadership, he gathered around him rapidly many friends, junior subaltern though he was. The most important to his future career was Bruno Loerzer, and this friendship, little though either knew it at the time, was to prove of far-reaching effect: Destiny had already decided that both these youngsters should write their names on history's roll of fame.

.

On 1 August 1914 the telegraph ticked out the message 'Mobilization' to every German military post. With typical Prussian exactness everything was ready. For many months people had hinted in whispers of the mobilization which had taken place in 1911, and again in 1912, but never before had the German people, or for that matter any other nation, witnessed a mobilization so thorough and so sudden. Within a day or two the country-side had been denuded of young men and horses—all required for the great effort—the throw that was to decide Germany's place in power politics, regardless of treaties, conventions, or agreements.

The face of Germany had undergone a complete and

extraordinary change. Not tents, as was to be reasonably expected, but pitch-pine huts, each plank of which was cut ready and numbered so that it could be dropped into place, sprang up at every railway centre, fitted and ready to receive the troops *en route* to either the Western or Eastern fronts—to provide refreshment and to give first aid. So thorough was this mobilization that even ice was everywhere at hand to cool the drinking water of the troops—for the summer of 1914 was a hot one.

Lieutenant Hermann Göring joined his regiment for active service—his country trod its path of Destiny.

The dice was thrown. It had to be followed up with every sacrifice—a casting away of peaceful prosperity in town and country in exchange for the horrors and privation of a long war. The German people stood naked before a hostile world. From the Vosges to the Vistula, from the Baltic to the Adriatic, Germany was a bristling camp and a gigantic powder-store. Despite the traditional idea of German weakness for, and easy acceptance of, authority, within eight days of mobilization hundreds of cases of looting and brigandage occurred in the more outlandish districts from which able-bodied police had been withdrawn. It was no uncommon sight to see an old man, in mufti, guarding a railway approach or reservoir armed only with a none-too-modern rifle. The civil population was thrown into great confusion for which there was no real excuse, but the Prussian Staff Command had to be obeyed: 'Take care of the civilian only when everything connected with the armed forces is cared for.' The Prussian military system and the civil code of the Reich came into conflict and the whole system of civil government broke down. But all this was of no importance to the young officers who saw in the war opportunity for rapid promotion and the exercise of their professional activities.

The military mind alone functioned and young Göring

30 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

was swept by it across Germany to the Vosges sector of the Western front, and he is recorded as being on frontier patrol, feeling out conditions, before the actual commencement of hostilities.

He was then in his twenty-first year—a dare-devil and out for all the fun a brush with the French could offer. 'We shall be home before the leaves fall,' the army had been told. At his age he did not envisage the conflict as anything but a field day. Every young officer was firmly convinced that the war was to defend the culture, liberty, right and honour of the German people, just as the English and the French had been told the same oft-repeated excuse for war on the grand scale. Domestic propaganda had instilled in the young military mind that Germany was so strong as to make the coming war virtually a walk-over. To Hermann Göring, then, the thought that international greed and finance and its consequent struggle for world markets was playing Germany as a pawn, just as the other nations were being moved about on the board of chance, would have been high treason; now he knows. But in 1914, to him, the war was 'A Storm sent by God,' and because it appeared that there was an international conspiracy against Germany, a conspiracy which had ranged nearly 80 per cent of the world's population, with all that it connoted in arms, material, and finance against his Fatherland, the patriot in him said: 'Germany must win.' He thought of the motto of the army—'Gott mit uns'—and was satisfied.

And so he marched with the rest, a song on his lips and a laugh in his heart, taking the spirit of his favourite Frederick the Great with him into the war against the 'Red Trousers,' about whom he had heard so much from his soldier-father in boyhood. He was going to Alsace—he would recapture the glories of '71.

Circumstances have always seemingly conspired to

place Göring right to the front—in boyhood among his beloved mountains—at the Cadet Academy—and in the actual commencement of hostilities he was probably the first German officer to contact the enemy—for he was in at the preliminaries to the battle of Mülhausen, and the official war history records that ‘the first contact of the German and French forces occurred in Alsace. Even before the declaration of war German patrols had crossed into French territory. . . .’ It is quite possible that both the French and the Germans exchanged shots before the actual outbreak of hostilities because of this frontier breach ; in any case, the French accepted the provocation with great promptitude and threw a small force through the Belfort ‘Gap’ and advanced upon Mülhausen.

At the same time Lieutenant Göring was moving forward with his company in an armoured train from the right bank of the Rhine towards Mülhausen. The German idea, intended to be conveyed to the enemy, was a break through and an upward northerly blow at Paris, but the set plan was that the move should be actually a feint to draw large concentrations of French troops away from the Belgian front and thus enable them to effect, with the armies of von Kluck and von Bülow, a quick and decisive attack on Paris. Once in the heart of France, terms could be dictated, enforced by all the military power in the hands of the German General Staff, which contemplated an easy victory before England could land any appreciable fighting force on the Continent. The French avowed objective was the destruction of the Rhine bridges beyond, and to the north of, Mülhausen, but on reflection it appears as if the main reason was a political rather than a military one—the liberation of the dual province torn from France in 1871, the successful result of which would have given France and the Allies a terrific moral advantage and early prestige in, what all now knew to be, a difficult and prolonged war.

32 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

Göring had once been in garrison in Mülhausen and consequently he was ordered by his company commander to reconnoitre the position in the town, with definite instructions to return immediately as the armoured train had to return to its depot owing to fuel and water shortage. Arrived in the town with his platoon, he learned that a French dragoon patrol was about to establish forward headquarters for the rapidly advancing French in the town hall. He saw proclamations in French and German pasted up on the shop windows and walls counselling the population to offer no resistance to the French arms. Forgetful of the waiting train and its lack of water, forgetful of his company commander, he ordered his platoon to engage the enemy, but the confusion caused by the crowds rendered the attack abortive. His platoon had the satisfaction of defacing the alien proclamations and bearing away some as trophies. Then a sweep through the town and on to Dornbach, where he again encountered the French and offered action. Shots were exchanged so effectively that the French, thinking Mülhausen occupied already by large German forces, delayed their attack upon the town until evening of the same day, 8 August. The French official report for the day runs: '... after driving back a weaker German force, (we) occupied the town (Mülhausen) and the neighbouring one of Altkirch.'

Beating a strategic retreat Göring and his platoon returned to the armoured train complete with booty of war—four French dragoon horses.

The following day the battle of Mülhausen was fought. General Josias von Heeringen, one-time Inspector-General of the Prussian Guards, and in 1908 Minister of War, was in command of the German 7th Army Corps investing the town. Massing his troops on the Kolmar-Breisach line, he prepared a counter-attack, and it was in the preliminary skirmishing leading up to the tempor-

ary success of this counter-attack that Göring underwent his 'most peculiar personal war experience.'

On 9 August he had got together a specially selected patrol of cyclist scouts, all of whom had already particularly distinguished themselves, notable among them being Sergeant Käsemann and Corporal Tscherisch, the latter having risen in the later days of the Weimar republic to the rank of Captain in the Reichswehr. At sunrise the Göring patrol pushed forward to Mülhausen. The path was familiar to all—in the piping days of peace this road had been traversed many times on route marches, and where, in those days, lewd soldier jests and ribald songs had been upon the lips of all, to-day grim war occupied their thoughts and their attentions. The patrol, as part of the advance guard of the 7th Army, swept back the French outposts and went on through Illzach and Sausenheim. The enemy withdrew rapidly. A French post of sixty men holding Sausenheim beat a hasty retreat without firing a shot before Göring's tiny commando of only seven cyclists. This was much too easy. Their easy advance had made them foolhardy, and on the outskirts of Mülhausen, where the suburban railway encircled the town, and the streets in every direction passed under the bridges carrying the railway, the bridgeheads were naturally held by French guards. Sublimely regardless of this factor the patrol dashed on into the town, right into the middle of French Headquarters. There and then a crazy idea entered the head of the young and reckless Lieutenant Göring—an idea such as so often has found genesis in many another young soldier's brain, and which can end only in death or glory. Just before the Göring patrol had entered the town, a straggler from a German rifle regiment had linked up with them, mounted on a French dragoon horse which had come to him in the way peculiar to war. Quick as thought, Göring exchanged his bicycle for the rifleman's

34 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

mount. There seemed to be some correlation between the French General, Paul Pau, surrounded by his staff, and the horse. Years rolled back and here was what he had dreamed of in the rambling castles of his boyhood. He felt that he had a right to be in the town, the town of old garrison memories—and there was the General's staff not a rifle-shot ahead, standing on the bridge before his old barracks.

What is Göring thinking of? Nothing less than dashing into the crowd, composed of civilians and soldiers, snatching up the French General by the scruff of his neck, slinging him across his saddle-bow and bolting for German Headquarters with his prisoner of war. Here is the Göring of Myth and Legend—dominated by the past and living in the present. Rising in his stirrups, he was about to press his heels into the flanks of his borrowed mount and to ride forward at stretch gallop to put his mad plan into operation, when one of his men lost his nerve and fired point-blank into the group of ornate and dignified French officers. What a wasps' nest had been stirred up!

Wild shooting, cries of alarm from the civilians, supports rushed up to the bridge, and in a twinkling of an eye Göring's plan was doomed. He and his seven men were faced with a fight with the whole French garrison. Discretion was the better part of valour. They turned and fled, back over the path they had so gaily and irresponsibly travelled an hour before, and in one mad headlong dash arrived at their headquarters without a scratch.

To this day Hermann Göring bemoans the non-success of this enterprise—the stealing of a General from under the nose of his own army. It would have made such a spectacular impression!

Later in the same afternoon Göring's patrol was called upon to make a reconnaissance around the village of Illzach. Göring installed himself and his men in the steeple

of the church, the better to make his readings and to survey a larger area. Hardly were they settled in when the advance guard of the French entered the village. From the north he could see the 15th French Army Corps moving down and around to take up an encircling position on his own army dispositions. While he was deliberately recording the enemy concentrations on his ordnance map his men were coolly potting away at every red pantaloons they could see in the streets below. To make the position of the patrol more untenable the German artillery opened fire on the village. This was too much. Out of the church and into the main village street the patrol poured, and in its mad stampede to break out of the village, back to its own lines, a few French prisoners were taken, whose information very timely filled in the blanks in Göring's report.

Within a few days a new Alsace army had been organized under Pau's command, and the Germans were driven out of Mülhausen, on 20 August, suffering a severe defeat. Thereafter German strategy in that area was designed to be purely defensive.

From then on followed a series of actions in which Göring found his unit moved hither and thither, advancing and retreating according to the luck of war, until the battle of Baccarat in Lorraine. The German strategy by now had contemplated and commenced the use of trench warfare in this sector. The active Göring, cramped by the unaccustomed camp and trench life, fell a victim, not to a French bullet, but to an acute attack of articular rheumatism, and was sent behind the lines to a base hospital.

Meanwhile, his boon companion of the care-free early days of soldiering, Bruno Loerzer, had been seconded for duty to the German air service, an arm to which the High Command not unwisely attached great hopes and importance.

36 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

No one could have been more surprised and shocked than Loerzer when, upon his return from a practice flight at Freiburg, where he was undergoing instruction, he received a note from a nearby military hospital asking him to call. The note was signed: 'Hermann.' A myriad imaginings filled Loerzer's mind. Was Göring badly wounded? Was it a bayonet wound? Had his friend been blown up? Farthermost from his thought was articular rheumatism, and he must have felt considerable relief when, a short while later, he stood at the bedside of his friend, who was packed in wrappings and who growled at him: "Not a wound, only rheumatism—caught it at Baccarat. They say I can turn out of bed in about eight days—damned painful though!" On learning that it was uncertain by what time Göring could return to duty with his regiment, Loerzer exclaimed: "I tell you what, come to the front with me as my observer! You won't need your legs for that; as to your knees, well, we can pack them up in lashings of cotton wool to keep them warm." "The idea sounds a good one," rejoined Göring, "but what about my transfer? I'll have to feel out the reserve battalion commander in Donauschingen."

It was left at that, but about a week later the battalion headquarters reported its lack of authorization—it must have regimental headquarters' sanction. "Donnerwetter, diese verdammte Amtschimmelei!" grumbled Göring, blaspheming at their red tape; when Loerzer flew off to the front only a day or two later there was friend Hermann perched up in the observer's cockpit. He had given himself his own authorization and created himself an airman.

This initiative is typical of Göring throughout his tempestuous career. He dropped a note to his regimental commander merely informing him of his 'change of duty.'

Contrary to what would have been expected from the German High Command, his exploit was winked at and his appointment to the air service was gazetted without further question. After all, there is a vast difference between taking french leave of one's regiment 'above the line' and 'behind the line.'

The two companion spirits went to Darmstadt, the base of the reserve squadrons, to await posting to one of the newly organized field reconnaissance squadrons. According to standing orders, their new plane should have been flown from the 'Aviatik' aircraft works in Freiburg to the reserve base at Darmstadt, the works' test pilot putting her 'all out' during the trip and then handing the machine over, as being in order officially, to the stores officer. Not for these two adventurers! They tricked the test pilot, Zeigler, into allowing them to take off and then arrived in Darmstadt, reported for duty, declaring the machine as the one allotted to them for service. Stories like these rather upset one's ideas of the rigidity of German military control, but it is safe to assume that there were not many Görings in the German Army. In any case, the Germans recognized the urgent necessity for spirits of this type just a little before the Allied authorities. Men who go to their death in the air must be treated as slightly higher clay than the P.B.I.

Duty with the reserve squadron embraced new thrills. Aerobatics, or such as they were in those early days of flying, occupied his time. He had to make himself proficient in an entirely strange field of arms. The finding of hidden targets, accuracy in the handling of bombs, the use of aerial cameras—all gave a zest to the new, dangerous, and strange service to which he had voluntarily appointed himself.

One day the plane in which Göring sat as an observer appeared over Wiesbaden. Suddenly he espied a familiar house among dense trees. It was his brother's. Signal-

38 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

ling to Loerzer to go down, they swept over the place at low altitude, dived, zoomed, wagged their tail in greeting, and flew away home. Upon landing at Darmstadt, the friends learned that the guard at Wiesbaden, knowing that German planes should not be flying so low, had fired upon them, thinking them at first to be an enemy scout.

Göring—the dare-devil and irrepressible.

.

At last they left on detachment to Section 25 of the German field air service, based on Stenay—a section in which the Crown Prince, the commander of the 5th Army Corps, was himself directly interested, because of his belief in this new war weapon.

Loerzer was expected, Göring not.

“What the devil do you want here?” asked the section commander. “I am Loerzer’s observer,” replied Göring. “For God’s sake,” despaired the commander, by now completely exasperated. “I have more observers than I can do with. I am sorry I’ve no use for you—reserve headquarters should have known better. Report to Section 36 at Cunel—they are short of observers there.” “Then I’m sorry but I can’t stay, sir,” Loerzer puts in. “My observer is necessary to me.” “Then do what you damned well like—he can stay,” barked back the section commander. This particular section commander never repented his decision, for in their accuracy and complete reliability Göring’s reports excelled all others on that sector. Everything that he carried through was marked by a thoroughness *par excellence*, and attacks were built up, speedily, based on his observations. He had a complete understanding of essentials and gained a mastery of them to the elimination of all minor material.

And so his early days in the air service were spent—reconnaissance behind the French lines, bombing,

ground ' strafing ' with pistols, and camera work on the chain of forts surrounding Verdun.

During his early service Göring carried out many orders of great strategical importance, but the incident which won him his first war decoration is outstanding. Reports had reached German Headquarters that extensive earthworks were being thrown up to take heavy gun emplacements. Rumour had already called it the ' Power Turret,' and it was Göring's task to find its exact position. On his first flight he located the position and brought back very fine photographs, on which were based the plans for its destruction. The German artillery found range and opened fire; battery after battery of ' heavies ' pounded away at the French position, while Loerzer and Göring circled about, a few miles behind the French lines, guiding the batteries' fire by means of the none-too-secret method of rockets. At the same time, Göring drew a plan of the positions of the falling shells in relation to the desired objective and, flying back over the fire-control, he threw his report bag, containing the sketch, so skilfully from a height of 2000 feet that it landed literally into the fire-control officer's lap. For another hour or so he directed the batteries' fire from vertical observation until the ' Power Turret,' which, if completed by the French, would have proved an almost insuperable obstacle to any projected German advance, was finally and completely destroyed.

Reward followed immediately. The Crown Prince himself, as leader of the 5th Army Corps, invested both Loerzer and Göring with the Order of the Iron Cross (First Class). What was more welcome, they were granted short leave.

Returned from leave the two airmen were confronted with a schedule of reconnaissance duties staggering in volume and difficulty. " Here, look at this," complained Göring. " Enough work here to last us a week, and they

want the reports in by to-morrow. The rest of the squadron, the lazy hounds, appear to have done nothing all the time we've been on leave, or else the old man's got it in for us." The assignment was to photograph the chain of fortifications around Verdun.

Up into the air they went, loaded with enough photographic plates to satisfy the most exacting commander.

The machines then in common use in the German air service had the observer's cockpit built so awkwardly that the expanse of wing jutting out from either side of the fuselage made vertical photographing extremely difficult and complicated. Göring overcame this by leaning the whole of the upper part of his body over the rim of the cockpit, just managing to retain his hold in the machine by pressing his legs against the opposite side under the rim of the seating. For over an hour, with short interruptions for recharging his camera, he hung head downwards, in his hands the heavy apparatus, on to the plates of which he trapped the image of every objective noted in his instructions. How he blessed his father for allowing him his mountain days that had developed his muscles and kept his circulation in trim.

The squadron commander duly received Göring's report and developed photos and was about to enter the *sanctum sanctorum* of the officer commanding. On these occasions it was usual for the pilot and observer to be present in case amplification of parts of the report, or explanation of points arising out of a photo, proved necessary. However, on this occasion, whether by accident or by design, the squadron commander omitted to take them with him. He had just pushed open the chief's door when he felt a tug at his coat tails. There was Göring. "What are you up to, Lieutenant Göring?" spluttered the perplexed officer angrily. "You have forgotten to take us along with you, sir," replied Göring, in a voice sufficiently raised as to be heard by the General

through the already half-open door. With a shrug of the shoulders and with evident bad grace the senior officer shepherded his two junior, but very deserving, airmen into the presence. While opportunity often brought Göring to the front, he was not going to allow design to keep him in obscurity.

.

In the spring of 1915 aerial warfare began a new development. Faster machines, with greater climbing power, fitted with new and improved apparatus, took the air. The Germans and the Allies introduced the early form of aeroplane wireless—the sending of messages by means of Morse. Göring quickly mastered this additional duty and his self-assertion was again made very patent in his first wireless message.

The German artillery at the time were putting up a very poor show in the assault on Beaumont, and he was directing battery fire from the air. The poor results of the gunners below, to whom he was feeding information, sent him into a rage. Beside himself with exasperation he signalled to the batteries to cease fire and announced his intention of returning to his aerodrome. He then dashed out a message in open text to the battery commander responsible for such a sheer waste of good ammunition. "You can stop firing, you won't hit the b—— target anyhow."

This was Göring's first 'broadcast,' for, not being in the day's code, the simple but caustic message was naturally picked up by the French. At Headquarters the General of Artillery fumed and raged, and through the Air Command Göring received a severe reprimand. From thence onward it was strictly forbidden for messages to be sent other than in the code for the day or flight.

The year 1915 passed fairly swiftly and the days were

42 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

beguiled with bombing expeditions, fights here and there and routine reconnaissance, but two outstanding incidents, one arising out of the other, cannot be lightly passed over.

On the occasion of the Crown Princess Cecilie's visit to her husband's headquarters at Stenay the French had inconveniently arranged a bombing raid. She had a narrow escape from falling bombs and flying debris (she mentions the raid in her *Memoirs*) and Göring, infuriated by what he considered to be an insult to the Crown Princess (for nothing could persuade him that her visit and the arrival of the enemy bombers were pure coincidence), induced Loerzer to take the air after the Frenchmen. Seated in his cockpit, he fingered the trigger of a new model of a Mauser pistol, fitted with a magazine containing twenty-five cartridges. He would show the Frenchmen!

The tiny two-seater plane gained height until it was high above the French bombers. Loerzer put her into a mad headlong dive right into the enemy, Göring at the same time emptying the magazine of his pistol into the nearest plane, which limped away to its own territory, but still under control. The Germans followed it home to its aerodrome, and Göring unloaded his complete cargo of 'airmen's mice,'¹ into the sheds beneath, as some little memento of the meeting.

Back in Stenay the two airmen were thought much of. They had been the only Germans to take the air against the raiders, and even then without orders.

The failure to bring about any definite issue on this last escapade set Göring furiously to think. 'A more formidable weapon than the Mauser pistol, despite its magazine of twenty-five cartridges, was urgently needed. By tinkering with makeshift pieces of metal he succeeded

¹ Small but concentrated bombs having great destructive power owing to their heavy detonation.

in mounting, along the nacelle of his plane, a light machine-gun, which, while possessing no fine engineering principles, was yet used by him with salutary effect during the late summer of 1915 in his flights in the Champagne area. He was thus the first German airman to use a machine-gun in aerial warfare.

.

The aeroplane had revolutionized warfare and its effect had proved more far-reaching than even the most earnest supporter had dared to hope. During 1915 aircraft of both sides remained in the air for two hours at a stretch over each other's lines and often reconnaissance had to be undertaken at low altitudes, thereby increasing the danger. Germany was lagging behind in quality of machines, and towards the close of 1915 the Allies appeared to have established, definitely, their supremacy in the air. This was due largely to the fact that Germany was using old Taube, Albatross, Aviatik and L.V.G. machines, with horse-power often thirty below that of the Allied machines.

Then suddenly Allied pilots were surprised to find that the German machines climbed higher and faster, and the short-lived ascendancy over the enemy came to an abrupt conclusion. The Germans had modelled their new machines on British lines, discarding the Taube type for the Ago tractor machine, resembling in appearance Avros or Sopwiths, while their new Aviatik machine looked like a B.E. The new Aviatik, in fact, became the most popular German machine of this period.

With this revolutionary weapon under his control the airman became invaluable—in fact, he dominated the battlefield, and here Göring was in his glory. He was the acknowledged master of aerial fire-control, and it was the German 'heavies,' with Göring and his like as their eyes, which extended over a range of vision of a hundred

44 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

miles, that saved the German line of communications at St. Quentin and east of Cambrai. The combination of long-range howitzers and aerial control, with instrument and camera, became and remained the master-spirit of the war. To Göring, therefore, war became an intellectual pursuit of absorbing interest. With his genius for work, so often commended in German Army orders, he was able to read the mind of the enemy commander from the position of his bivouacs, the size of his concentrations and the direction of his long line of transport vehicles. Beneath his hawk-like eye the fog of war became dissipated.

Aircraft manufacture in Germany was under complete Government control; in England the private manufacturer was reaping a fine harvest from the muddle of the armament industry, little being done to co-ordinate quality and supply, while the brains of capable designers stood at a discount. Germany had become the Mecca of all 'neutral' aviation experts, one of whom, Antoine Herman Fokker, a crack Dutch pilot as well as a sound aeronautical engineer, became famous at an early age, and almost overnight, with a new fighting plane which came to bear his name. This machine was the first to mount a machine-gun whose rate of fire was synchronized with the revolutions of its engine and which, consequently, enabled the pilot to 'fight' the plane as well as to control its flight, because of its property for firing forward between propeller beats.

The introduction of this machine into general service spelled finis to the observation duties of Göring; he applied for leave to undergo a pilot's instruction course, and very soon was back at the Aviatik Flying School at Freiburg. Having already a sense of flight he gained his pilot's wings in record time and without once crashing.

October finds him back again at the front flying a new A.E.G. fighter, and from thence onward he rapidly

achieved distinction as a *Jagdflieger*.¹ The French and English had begun their first real offensive in the summer, accompanied by considerable air concentrations. They were able to retain their control of the air during this period because the German Staff had depleted its Western front of fast scouting machines in order to bring about a quick decision in the Russian war zone, and German air tactics had become purely defensive.

Suddenly, and without warning, the German air factories loosed vast swarms of fast new Aviatiks, Albatrosses, Fokkers and A.E.G.s, mostly twin-engined battle-planes carrying guns, upon the British and French. In the advance guard of this air armada sat the airmen Göring and Loerzer, each now in his own machine, members of the dreaded *Jagdstaffel* 5.²

Together they made life hot for the Allied airmen, and in return received some pretty rough knocks themselves.

On a typical November day, with visibility poor, Göring and two others flew out on patrol. A few days before that, in the mess, he had heard of a new mammoth British battle-plane, carrying a crew of several men, having been seen in the sector. Still very young, Göring yearned to meet this giant and to engage it in combat. Suddenly the mist cleared away and away behind the British trenches he espied the giant. The hunt was up. On to the attack, he signalled to his companion machines and dashed blindly into what promised to be an unusual scrap without further thought. Instead of complying with his signal, the other machines in his flight detached and turned about. 'Lazy swine,' thought Göring, and determined to attack the British plane alone. Three thousand feet above him a covey of about twenty British

¹ Literally 'hunting flyer,' actually a fighter-scout.

² Literally 'hunting formation', the number of planes in which is controlled by the exigencies of the service for the time being. Loosely a squadron. The German equivalent of a British co-operation fighter squadron,

46 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

fighters was preparing to descend to lower altitudes, and it was this that had caused the other two Germans to turn tail. By now Göring had also spotted them, but his curiosity led him on to take a closer look at the new British machine.

Employing all the tricks he had learned in the flying school, and in earlier combats, he tumbled down to engage it. He let off a burst of fire into the gun position in the enemy's tail; the gunner fell, his place taken a second later by another, who, in turn, became a victim of Göring's deadly sheaves. The unwieldy battle-plane was unequal to the smaller machine's response to rudder and throttle and, during an upward flash, Göring silenced its 'midships gun and set its left engine on fire. The Britisher turned about and sought home in a series of drunken sideslips. By this time the swarm of small fighters had dropped leisurely out of the clouds and, seeing what was on hand, fell on Göring like a dozen dogs on a bone. Hell was let loose—the British machine-guns poured death into the German. Shots hit his engine, others struck him, and several burst his petrol tank. Reaching over to connect up his engine with his emergency tank, he went into a stall, and this upset the charging case of his machine-gun and his last ammunition fell to the earth below. With a bullet in his leg, without ammunition, and left with very little fuel, there was nothing for it but to try to make a breakaway for home. To outwit and evade his assailants, he put his machine into a loop, following it up with a spin, and a second later the back of his seat was shot into his upper thigh and buttocks. He then went into the maddest spin and tumble of his reckless life; he was hardly conscious and the British fighters, thinking him done for and themselves low in petrol, made for home. But more was to come; danger was by no means past, for the clouds rolled down from above and the thick Flanders mist

obscured his vision from below. He was somewhere over the British lines—that much he knew. A moment later he was assured of his exact position by the British machine-guns from the trenches below. Semi-conscious, he had dropped beneath the mist and was only a few feet above them. He put his nose up, subconsciously reacting to the danger, and limped over the barren expanse of no-man's-land ; anxious for his petrol supply, racked with pain from several wounds, and fearful that his leaking tank, which was spurting petrol into his cockpit, would catch fire, he somehow effected what passed for a landing in a cemetery behind his own lines, and lost consciousness. In the cemetery was a church, which, at that time, had been pressed into service by the Germans as a makeshift hospital. There, after practically landing on the operating table, he was operated upon for his wounds, which, but for the pressure of the seating and framework of his machine against him, would undoubtedly have caused him to have bled to death. To the field surgeon on duty it appeared more than miraculous that Göring had escaped with his life, for there were no less than sixty bullet holes in his plane.

.

Inefficiency in British aircraft manufacture was the prime cause of many of the German air successes during this period, but General Trenchard, then the head of the Royal Flying Corps, devised a brilliant scheme of operation, the exercise of which had the effect of holding the German Eagles.

As soon as he had obtained, from the more progressive British firms, a supply of modern battle-planes, the plan was put into action.

The old, slow machines, types of which had taken so many British airmen to their deaths against the superior Fokker, were sent up in flocks like worker bees, while

48 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

high above these workers circled two or more of the modern ' battles,' ready to swoop and engage any enemy machine that took up the apparently appetizing provocation of the old slow buses. These tactics resulted in single combat in the air becoming more infrequent, and, arising out of the consequent development, both sides reorganized their air forces into fighting squadrons working in cohesion, to the almost complete elimination of the lone fighter. Thus, by the nature of things, all fighting pilots came into the limelight of war's theatre. Tales of their exploits have filled many books and true facts have often been obscured in the glamorous method of the telling. But their deeds called for singular daring in the daily hazard, which was faced cheerfully. These air crusaders conquered, or they died. As conquerors they were mostly chivalrous and modest; in death, to which they all went gloriously, they wear a hero's wreath as crown.

Soon the world began to speak in admiration of Immelmann, Wintgen, Boelke, Ball and McCudden; German or English, they were all looked upon as giants of a new age. In the German firmament the stars of Richthofen, Udet, Loerzer and Göring were just beginning to glimmer, but quickly, with Time's speed, they were destined to form a brilliant constellation, which illuminated a difficult page in German history.

The new grouping called for experienced leaders. While Göring was in hospital, recovering from his wounds, Loerzer was appointed to the command of Field Squadron 26, based on Kolmar in Alsace; certified fit again for active service, it was quite natural that he should be posted to Loerzer's squadron, and the old threads were taken up. The squadron moved to Mülhausen, and they were both back again in the old area previously garrisoned by the 112th Infantry Regiment; their new aerodrome was the 'Habsheimer' parade ground. They felt completely at home.

The squadron was on patrol, one bright morning, high above the town. To the east rose the Vosges, while to the westward swept the great plain beyond Belfort ; the blue sky rendered difficult the observation of any approaching objective until it was fairly close to, and the din of their own engines drowned the noise of any approaching plane. Göring was flying close in to Loerzer and waved with his arm to a point beyond the French lines ; a dim speck rapidly became more visible until, ultimately, it resolved itself into a French scout. Both manœuvred in what had become an almost exclusively German practice to get on the Frenchman's tail, but he was too smart for them. The Germans turned about as if to make for Mülhausen and the Frenchman followed. From out of the blue two more French planes made their appearance, about 1500 feet above Göring. Vainly Loerzer endeavoured to attract his attention to his danger, only to discover that Göring was about to engage the first Frenchman in combat. With his sights trained on his target, Göring was blind to all else. A machine-gun rattled, but it was not Göring's. One of the other Frenchmen had pounced upon him from above and had emptied his magazine into him in a spate of mad bursts. Loerzer attacked Göring's aggressor with such accuracy that he fell hurtling to the ground completely out of control, and crashed in flames. The two remaining enemy planes had gone.

On landing, Göring's machine was found to be riddled with bullets and his undercarriage barely held together to support his landing wheels. This timely rescue by Loerzer was regarded as just a wiping of the slate between Göring and himself, for he was in some small debt to Göring for getting him out of a similar nasty hole on the Somme, earlier in the summer operations.

.

50 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMAN

Hermann Göring's reputation as a fighting pilot and absolutely reliable reconnaissance officer had, by the early part of 1917, become definitely established. The High Command thought much of his ability and prowess and rewarded these qualities by promoting him, in May, to the command of Squadron 27, a squadron of very indifferent calibre whose pilots had not particularly well distinguished themselves during the whole eighteen months of the establishment of the squadron as a fighting force. In fact, this particular squadron had become notorious for its slackness and disproportionately great losses in men and machines. It required such a colourful personality as Göring's to rejuvenate it.

His new command meant something more than glory. It meant hard work in the still hours after strenuous fighting in the air, for the responsibilities of a squadron leader are great ; it is not enough that he should lead the attack or raid. He must be of such experience as to be able to work out, in every detail, the preparation for those operations. Here Göring found no rest. Between fights he was continually in conference with his adjutant. He knew that ground staff had to be encouraged to greater effort if bravery and skill in the air were to retain that air mastery on his front which he had helped to build.

Within a few weeks he had worked his squadron up to a standard second to none, and under his bold leadership it became the terror of the enemy—victory followed victory and Allied planes fell before their guns. The strategy of Göring's squadron counted ; benefiting by his own already full experience the planes, with their superior power and equipment, used to drop out of the clouds, lure the Allied machines over the German batteries, and leave the ground gunners to complete the work of destruction.

Towards the summer of 1917 Göring's squadron

moved to the Flanders front, to Iseghem, east of Ypres, and by a coincidence Loerzer's squadron was moved under the same command, and Squadrons 26 and 27 thus operated from the same aerodrome. About this time General von Höppner resigned his command in the field to take over supreme control of the German aerial campaign, and he combined his battle squadrons from time to time in one sector, thus literally blasting the Allies out of the air in such critical moments as when they were about to launch an offensive. In these concentrated air attacks Göring's squadron boasted hosts of victories, and even at this period of his career he appreciated the great need for intense co-operation between those preparing the way and those who completed the execution of the design. On every occasion when the German forces had overshot their bolt and found themselves outmanœuvred, it was the duty of such squadrons as Göring's to relieve the tension and to attract the enemy fire. Hundreds of flights of this nature were carried out. But it was the year 1918 which marked Göring as a peer among his fellows.

By the close of 1917 the Allied air forces, by co-ordination of plans, engines and factory reciprocity, were enabled to put many more machines into the air than the Germans. Already the pinch of war was telling on the industrial life of Germany; she had her labour troubles, while England had outgrown hers by the exercise of that 'muddling through' policy which is inherently British and which is only possible in Britain. To counter the attack from the waves of Allied machines a new scheme of air policy was built up by the Germans. Whereas previously a *Staffel*, or squadron, usually numbered twelve machines, now composite super *Staffeln*, or, as the Germans themselves began to call them, *Jagdgeschwader* squadrons, were organized, foremost among them being the one commanded by Freiherr Manfred von Richthofen.

52 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

Such squadrons were composed of four *Staffeln*, giving a total air strength of forty-eight machines.

Richthofen made such an incomparable success of this scheme that the High Command organized more and more *Jagdgeschwader*, and it was to the third of these super-squadrons that Göring's Field Squadron 26 was posted, in company with Loerzer's squadron and the squadron named after the famous ace, Boelke, who went to his death early in the air-war.

During the break through of the German Army, in its last desperate throw in March 1918, Göring's squadron was in continual employment. When this offensive had been held in May his squadron was withdrawn to behind Kemmel, to function as a sort of moral support to those other squadrons which appeared lacking in efficiency and with which Army Headquarters were sorely displeased.

Again he had the same rejuvenating effect upon these squadrons, and authority began to cast eyes upon him as one who could get things done. Temporary though it was, Göring secured for the hard-pressed Germans a local mastery of the air over Kemmel which gave to the long-suffering warriors in field grey below hope that rations and munitions would soon come up and a certain courage to fight on.

After Kemmel Göring was moved over to the 7th Army, then contemplating a new advance in the Chemin des Dames area; always where the carnage was greatest Göring seemed to be. From his lofty perch he watched the worn-out Germans in one superhuman effort sweep the equally worn-out French out of their position right back to the Marne. Fiercer than ever was the air conflict, for the troops sadly needed encouragement.

Then, on 21 April, Richthofen, the most famous German fighting pilot, fell to the guns of Captain A. R. Brown of 209 Squadron of the British Air Force, shot

down out of the sky in which he had reigned supreme for many long months.

Reinhardt became his successor, but his rule was short-lived—just a bare month. The closing months of the war reduced the expectations of life to a minimum.

Much has been written about Hermann Göring and his great love for uniforms and orders; many of the jokes are witty and are as popular in Germany as in foreign countries. At all of them he laughs himself and, in contradistinction to the stories of his vanity, is the following true story of an incident arising out of the bestowal upon him of that most coveted of all German orders—the *Pour le mérite*, equivalent to the V.C.

May 1918. Somewhere in France. Göring is about to start off on a flight over enemy lines. His adjutant detains him over pettifogging office routine, indents, returns and the like, and at last Göring breaks away to where his mechanics are warming up his plane, ready for taking off. 'To hell with sectional orders,' thinks Göring, 'let's away, the enemy is in front, not at G.H.Q., where the returns go.' He is seated at the 'stick,' the engine warms up into the sweet song that only the airman can appreciate, the propeller beats the air, faster and faster, and Göring hopes to get away before the figure of his adjutant, which he had just noticed emerging from the orderly room, grows larger. The adjutant breaks into a run. 'Here he comes, God knows what for,' thinks Göring, and he vociferates: "Leave me alone, we can go into things when I get back from my reconnaissance." "Important message," yells the adjutant, hoping to be heard above the engine's roar. "All the same to me," shouts Göring. "Let her go, boys!" "Lieutenant Göring!" shouts the adjutant, in despair, and with the last remaining ounce of his hard-pressed lungs: "A report has just come down from G.H.Q. that the Emperor has bestowed upon you the *Ordre Pour*

54 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY
le mérite!” “That’s no reason for you to burst your lungs shouting at me, is it?” grins Göring with satisfaction, and with that he taxies across the field to new fights and new victories.

After Reinhardt had carried on the Richthofen tradition for just over a month, a new machine had come out from Germany and the star flyers of the Richthofen circus were anxious to put it through its paces, in the lulls between the increasingly difficult conflicts. Göring first tried out the machine and was satisfied with its performance. Reinhardt took the plane up to about 3000 feet and, without warning, the machine fell to earth—the aileron rods had torn away. Reinhardt was dead and the Richthofen squadron was again without a leader.

Captain Hermann Göring was appointed to command this brilliant fighting organization. No mean matter to follow where Richthofen had led, but the Air Command considered that no one was better qualified for this task than he. Possible candidates at that time could have been counted on one hand, for most of the famous aces had by now met the end which almost inevitably awaits those who seek to master nature and war. If personal valour and example were needed in a leader of such men among men, then Göring possessed it. He was the born leader—the dare-devil and a good comrade. Not one of the pilots in this famous command would have accepted his authority if he had not possessed these qualities. Twenty Allied planes had fallen to him in single combat, to say nothing of those that had fallen to the ground in flames or out of control in a ‘free for all’ in which no individual airman could take credit.

In August the German front broke, and death came quickly in the ranks of Göring’s command. The supply of new pilots was insufficient to maintain the squadron’s

strength ; replacements for lost machines were not forthcoming. The squadron was depleted until only eleven machines were left to take the air. Göring organized this remnant into one squadron ; it still fought on. Four more planes were accounted for by the Allied airmen, and in such a condition the squadron could not function. Young pilots were drafted out, but they were not Richt-hofens, Boelkes, Immelmanns and Görings. They were raw and hopeless—hopeless through no fault other than lack of experience. Thus, because of these conditions, the Allies practically drove the Germans out of the Western skies, but, where they were aloft, they rendered good account of themselves.

.

Hermann Göring knew nothing of politics in early November 1918. He cursed the food transport for shortage of supplies ; he raved against the flying schools which sent him half-trained pilots, and he called to his Maker to witness the criminality of the petrol and munition services which starved his beloved machines of supplies, cramping them all like horses in a stable. He was a soldier—he knew nothing of Social Democrats and why they should refuse to vote for supplies in the Reichstag. Rumour had it that there was a revolution at home ; he only knew that there was fighting to be done in Flanders. He was trained in the school of imperialism—the Emperor was the fount of sovereignty and power—he was the State. The navy was flying the Red Flag in Kiel ; the Kaiser had abdicated and crossed into Holland, while rumour had just spread a foul lie that German ministers and generals were parleying with the Allies for an armistice. No ! It was not a dream. A message had just come through : ‘ Armistice signed 5 a.m. cease hostilities 11 a.m.’ This was on 11 November 1918. This meant peace.

Göring thought of all those who could not enjoy the peace—his comrades, the young German eagles, who, morning after morning, had gone out against the enemy and who, in due course, failed to return. It was then, on that cold November morning in 1918, that he changed from the reckless, dare-devil hunter of the skies into the hardened, embittered, sworn lifelong enemy of Social Democracy. He swore that he would never forget those who had fallen and those who were prepared to fall for their country, and that he would remember and search out and ruthlessly destroy all those Left forces which had brought about the collapse.

There is the key to the brutal vigour with which he pursued the attack on all the Left parties in Germany.

.

Calling around him the remnants of his squadron, he told them, in bitter tones, of the news. From Army Headquarters had come the order to fly the machines and armament back to Darmstadt. And then a further order to await the arrival of an American commission to whom they were to be surrendered, on 12 November.

Göring spoke: "Comrades! This we will not do. For four years we have fought the French and the English; for four years we have given knock for knock. But to go running to the Americans, who, as long as we had money, traded with us as 'Neutrals,' and who now have stepped in to divide up the spoils wrung out of a broken Germany, with our tails down—no, boys, not for us." For Hermann Göring there was now no High Command, because to his philosophy the well-spring of all power over him as a German had gone—into Holland. From henceforth he exercised sole command over his band. He became a ruthless *condottiere*. Flying back to Germany news came to hand that a small squadron had landed in Mannheim and had been promptly disarmed by

the soviet awaiting them at the airport. Göring ordered action among his braves in an attempt to release his fellow-airmen down below. The decision communicated to the rebels below had the effect of obtaining the return of their arms to the earth-bound squadron, and Göring flew on into the heart of Germany. Behind him, in close pursuit, flew a German Staff officer in a vain endeavour to enforce the terms of the Armistice. At Darmstadt the majority of the machines of the Richt-hofen squadron were handed over to the German authorities. Göring at least did not swallow the actual bitter pill of their surrender.

At Aschaffenburg Göring experienced the most bitter moment of his young life until then. He was compelled to demobilize along with the remainder of his comrades. Suddenly a startling innovation of German politics was brought abruptly to his attention—a 'soldiers' soviet' had arrived in the town from Würzburg with the intention of stirring up the passions of the worn-out rank and file, which they considered fertile soil on which to sow the new freedom, against their officers. A word from Göring and his men so discomfited the soviet that they were glad to try other fields more distant.

Göring took final leave of his brother officers and men in the Stiftskeller of Aschaffenburg, and for the first time in his life his tongue was loosened in a temperamental speech, which indicated in which direction his future work was to lie. "The battle of weapons is ended! The new fight for freedom, principles, morals and the Fatherland is on. We have to follow a long and difficult path, and our way is dark, comrades! But truth will be our light. We must be proud of this truth and of what we have done. We must always think on this. Our time will come!" Göring, the leader, spoke, but many years were to pass before his pious hope, expressed then more in bravado than in knowledge, was to come true.

PHASE TWO

THE SHADOW OF THE HAMMER AND SICKLE

1918-1933

IN the first few weeks following the Armistice all was chaos in Germany. The people, cheated by the traditional set of rulers, had now fallen easy victims to a new clique. The people were being ruled by the people for the benefit of the people, or so they had been told. The workers had direct access to government, but it was not the workers who governed. There sprang up a smug middle-class Government, in which was included, for the sake of appearance, a few revolutionary soldiers and sailors, in very minor posts. So panic-stricken at having to assume the rulership of 60,000,000 people was this Government, that to keep order where very little disorder would have prevailed brutal force was used upon quite innocent women and children. Curfew rang at night and armoured cars scoured the city streets, pouring death from their machine-guns wherever human life showed itself.

In short, while these professional Socialist politicians in the Reichstag had very materially assisted to make it impossible for the German Army to continue killing Englishmen and Frenchmen, they had yet found money to organize an auxiliary force at home, seemingly ready to put an end to the mortal existence of those who had returned safe from the battlefields of Flanders, and who, above everything, desired nothing more than to work,

eat, and sleep. The soldiers' councils were not revolutionary to any real extent beyond that they sought early release from military service; political design was farthestmost from their intentions.

The November revolution was not a real revolution—it was the aftermath of a king running from his people. There was left, in Germany, disorder which the existing ruling class did nothing to alleviate; those of the army who took service under the new Republic did so from one of two motives. The older men sought to rebuild the military caste of the imperial army, making of the new people's army an *imperium in imperio* against the propitious time for the return of the Hohenzollern; the younger officers saw in such service a competence, a job to which they had already become accustomed, and an exercise of their superior breeding, as they thought, over what they expected to be semi-tradesmen in the Government.

It was back to this land of opportunists, hucksters and, in some cases, idealists, that Captain Hermann Göring came. In Berlin he found three factions, remnants of the régime to which he was naturally automatically drawn, the moderates of the Social Democrats, who were trying to revitalize the nation, and the 'Reds,' a very minor but vociferous crowd, who wanted a 'German' Russia. What a bedlam! But worse was to follow in the middle 'twenties, when nearly fifty political parties sought favour of the electorate at the polls.

Early in December the newly founded German Officers' Society held a gigantic rally in the Berlin Philharmonic Hall. The hall was packed to capacity and the committee sat enthroned in state on the platform. Among other things for which the meeting had been called was a resolution to debate a new order which had emanated from the War Ministry. All officers still wearing uniform had to discard their epaulettes and other indications

of their rank. In the place of these traditional ornaments, blue stripes, in number and size according to rank, were to be attached to the jacket sleeves. Already this order had caused a great uproar and this meeting was going to deal with the matter officially and make the appropriate joint protest to the Minister of War.

The meeting had just been declared open by the chairman, when a hush fell over the gathering. The temporary Minister of War, General Reinhardt, late commander of the 6th Army Corps in France, had walked into the hall and prepared to address the gathering. His epaulettes were gone and his sleeve bore the blue stripes recently ordained in his own army order. The General spoke: "Gentlemen, I will not explain why I have made this order, to which I know you all take such grave exception, but, believe me, it is for the common good. I sincerely hope that the order of the Ministry will be observed." Just that. With a courteous inclination of the head, and a military salute, he turned to leave. A voice rang through the hall, cold, yet pregnant with anger. "Stop, General!" Up on to the platform stepped a young officer, lithe of limb and broad of shoulder, wearing upon them the epaulettes and stars of a captain, while around his neck, suspended from the riband of Prussian colours, glittered the gold-and-enamel cross of the rare and famous *Pour le mérite*. His sleeves were bare of blue stripes. Brazenly and contemptuously facing the Minister stood Captain Göring, last commander of the intrepid Richthofen squadron. If Allied bullets had failed to quell his spirit, why should a mere General, who now, at all events, was only one on the sufferance of a *bourgeois* Government—here to-day and gone to-morrow. The vast gathering of officers waited. Here was a Daniel come to judgment. Göring spoke: "I thought that you would appear among us to-day, but I had hoped that you would have had the good taste

to wear upon your sleeve a black band in token of the deep mourning you should express at the rape of the army's tradition. I really think, sir, that red stripes would be more in keeping with your apparent sympathies." Scenes of great enthusiasm followed, under cover of which the Minister of War beat a hasty and undignified retreat. Crying for silence, Göring continued: "We officers have for four long years fought on the land, on the water, and in the air, risking our necks for our country. We return home and what happens to us? We are spat upon and our honour, the only tangible thing that is left to us is taken from us. This shall not be, I say. I say this to you all—it is not the people who are against us—they have worked with us during these four long years. They were with us as comrades, every class in the structure of our society. Not the people, but the others who have inflamed them against us, those same people who stabbed our glorious army in the back and want nothing more than to enrich themselves at the cost of the German people—and from now on I preach to you the deepest hatred against these criminals who are attacking the German people. The day will come, and this I know, when these 'gentlemen' are finished and when we can hunt them out—out of our Germany! For that you must work—you must be armed. That day will surely come." With that Göring left the hall with several of his closer friends, leaving his hearers somewhat bewildered, for while most of them knew how to fight, they had not been taught to think.

Christmas was fast approaching and already the revolutionary factions were preparing to leave the street brawls for the peace and 'Gemütlichkeit' of the traditional German Christmas. The revolution, as such, had worn itself out—Hindenburg had come forward to assist the Ebert Government. The landed classes breathed more easily and expropriation passed as a bad dream.

62 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

The Reichstag deputies could not quite make up their minds about the form the legislature should take—Soviets or National Assembly. Finally, after stormy debates, a strong majority of late Reichstag deputies and new delegates of the workmen's and soldiers' councils decided against the Soviets and voted for a National Assembly and a Constitution. They pledged themselves—'to work for the unity of the Reich' and to ensure this unity their policies proceeded immediately to disintegrate the empire by factionism and party growth throughout the provinces. The Reichstag, Reichsrat, and various Landtags, which under the Hohenzollern had been the legislature of the Reich, remained, and from time to time since 1919 it has been difficult for Germans or Englishmen alike to ascertain if the old institutions controlled the Weimar constitution or if the Weimar Republic ordered the conduct of its legislature.

This middle-class idea of a constitution pushed the Red boggy farther into the background, but it also produced conflict. The apparent liberality of Germany's new rulers attracted the 'big men' of industry and business and they sat in the councils of the nation under some banner or other—most certainly not, in the earlier days of what the Germans called the 'System,' as a national or conservative member. This concentration of the middle classes in the control of the Reich did not at all suit the more advanced thinkers among the 'revolutionaries,' and they formed themselves under Leibknecht's leadership into the Spartakist league which aroused the masses in what promised to be a second revolution early in 1919. The Government, so new to office, could do nothing.

It could neither rely upon the Safety Guards (*Sicherheitswehr*) organized by the police department nor upon the troops attached to the military control in Brandenburg. Much less reliance could be placed upon the

National Marine Corps, which had seized the Castle in Berlin from which they could not be expelled. Even their own leader designated them 'a gang of highway-men.' Berlin fell—Unter den Linden swarmed with many thousands of the rabble, many armed with a queer assortment of weapons, but the mob-rule of the revolutionaries who had rebelled against their own revolution ended with the entry of the military into Berlin on 12 January. Within a week all was quiet and the first elections for the National Assembly were in full swing, and immediately afterwards Ebert was installed by election first President of the Empire—we would say Republic, but even the most ardent social reformer in Germany appeared to have use for the word 'Reich.' It was certainly more imposing!

The work of settling finally the constitution still went on—delegates from all parties assisting in the drafting. When finished it was a bastard document. The earlier constitution of the Kaiser had equal weakness, and what Bismarck said of the constitution of the '71 Empire proved as applicable to that of the Weimar Republic: 'It is imperfect, but it was the utmost we were able to accomplish.'

The Peace Treaty had not yet been signed, and the Allies kept up the blockade of all German ports. With the demobilization of nearly ten million half-starved men from the army, and repatriated Germans from overseas, the peace brought more want and privation than was experienced in war. On all sides there was a general lack of food, clothing, and housing. The general condition of the country, with no internal purchasing power and no export trade, rendered impossible the absorption of these returning nationals into any form of employment. The difficulties under which the German Nation laboured were legion. The rulers had sowed the wind; it was reaping the whirlwind.

64 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

Political life literally ran to waste. 'Where statesmanship is stagnating, demagogy is in flower,' Friedrich Engels, the father of German Socialism, had written, and his disciples in Berlin set out by their own acts the truth of his dictum.

The revolutionary feeling was not yet quiescent and we have a picture of the revolutionaries toiling in Goethe's fair city of Weimar behind barbed-wire entanglements and guarded by machine-guns against the attacks of those whom they had caused to revolt and who now in return rebelled against their 'deliverers' from the 'Claws' of the Hohenzollern. Mass strikes, political murders, and street fighting became the running commentary of existence in Germany.

The war-profiteers were ably succeeded by the usufructuaries of the 'People's' revolution and by the greed of the operators of the inflation.

So-called volunteer corps sprang up everywhere, particularly in the east and south-east, attracting those adventurous spirits who could find no release in the peace. Many were used as the hirelings of certain interests to further doubtful causes. Others were just wandering marauders and murderers. Quite 60 per cent of these auxiliary military formations were orderly, and without their use, they for the most part being seasoned troops, the Poles, who grew audacious in their newly found liberty, and the Russians, would not have been checked in their westward advances through the Prussian marshes and the Silesian coalfields.

Through all this unholy strife Hermann Göring walked as one in a dream. He saw the good solid German soldier, peasant, and workman being promised the Golden Age by groups whose only intention was power. More wages, more leisure, and less work. The old, old cry. Meanwhile the Allies were demanding their pound of flesh at Versailles. Money to be paid by way of

Reparations was talked of glibly by all, and the millions rolled off the lips of the German delegates as easily as from those of the conquerors. The people would pay anyhow.

Göring was tossed about as a cork in a pond. He had his own views, though as yet somewhat inarticulate. His appeal to his brother officers in Berlin in December indicated that he was prepared to fight and—to wait. With no one yet on the horizon to assist him in the fighting, he had perforce to wait, for one man cannot fight a nation, and ready cash was also needed. Now Göring, in common with most others of his class, emerged from the war with his capital eaten away by the economic ravages of the conflict. Property he had, yes, but property was a liability; and to enjoy property and to meet the liabilities one must have cash in the bank, which he had not. He had to work if he was to live; but none in Germany wanted intrepid fighters and aeroplane pilots. Vainly he searched for any form of employment, but what could he do? Beyond the general education his parents had been careful to give him, roughly equivalent to the standard of the English public school, he had nothing to commend himself to any possible employer. Also, such an employer would have thought that a young man with all his decorations would have been somewhat 'sidy.' His influence might have been valuable as a half-commission man on the Stock Exchange through his social pull, but the Stock Exchanges in 1919 were hardly hives of industry, and his social circle, normally a happy hunting ground for any handsome young man who had bonds to sell, was impoverished to his own level.

In disgust, Göring shook off the dust of Germany from his feet and went to the Northern Highlands,

66 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

where the atmosphere was not so polluted and men still retained their manhood. He had heard that the Swedish Commercial Airways required a pilot of long flying experience to chart and pioneer their projected air-routes. He flew to Stockholm and was appointed to the vacancy. Then followed long, strange flights across mountains and up the rivers. He was at home in his element. The sky held no fear for him, although from time to time the strange weather vagaries held as much danger as the Allied bullets on the Western front. But his mind was occupied in the intensity of his work, and the murky waters of Berlin politics were stirred by other hands than his.

.

The long Scandinavian winter was well advanced. The year 1919 had seen many possibilities of the reopening of the great European conflict that had closed the year before and which the northern peoples had watched as an audience gazes spell-bound at the histrionic abilities of the human marionettes prancing the stage before them. In the main their sympathies had been with the Germans, but their bank accounts indicated an affinity with the western powers. After the war many German families took up residence in these hospitable lands, and the Swedes, particularly, watched with growing interest, not unaided by the propaganda from their German guests, the struggle of Germany to regain a foothold, albeit yet precarious, among the company of nations.

Count Eric von Rosen, famous Swedish explorer, internationally known from his hazardous journeys into the Gran Chaco, was in Stockholm. A blinding snow-storm had ravished the country-side for many hours and he had urgent affairs requiring his attention at his place in the country, Castle Rockelstad. The railway service was interrupted ; no car could possibly pass over the

roads blocked with fast-freezing snow. He determined to fly, and hired a plane from the Commercial Airways Company. His pilot was a young German, he was told, who had refused to give up his plane to the Allies after the Armistice. This young German had left his own country after the revolution, because he could find no work; he was also, so gossip ran, thoroughly disgusted with the epigenetic Weimar Republic. Moreover, during the past months, in his exploratory flights to blaze the way for the regular air-service, he had proved himself a reliable commercial flyer. The man was Hermann Göring. Always in the van. He had pioneered in the air for his own country; he was now one of the first in the air for Sweden. Through the foulest weather they flew; the engine was silenced in the roar of the northern icy blasts, which shook the machine as if it was a toy. Half blind by the driving snow and exhausted by his responsibilities, Göring succeeded ultimately in landing by Lake Baven, near the grim walls of Rockelstad Castle.

Warm drinks were provided in the great hall, and here Göring looked around. How like the haunts of his boyhood. Upon the walls reaching upward beyond the second floor, around which ran a gallery, were hung old weapons, armour, and paintings of incidents in bygone days of Sweden's greatness, and trophies which Count von Rosen had brought back from out-of-the-way corners of the earth were everywhere in evidence. Here was the home of a family after one's own taste, thought Göring. Florian Geyer, von Plettenburg, the Baltic Knights, all passed through his mind as he viewed the panoply of ancient nobility and modern exploration. As one in a dream the German moved about the huge hall, across which was coming a tall, stately woman. It was Carin von Kantzow, the sister-in-law of his host. Hermann Göring, the man who had never flinched in

68 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

air-attack, dropped his eyes as they met the steady blue ones of the woman. He became silent and respectful before the queen of the northern forests, but his heart was singing—for he was in love. The evening passed, and as conversation around the table quickened, Göring was moved to speak of himself, his war comrades, and of the dire state of his own country. He dwelt upon the terrible sufferings of those youngsters who had fought but who now found difficulty in finding their daily bread. Carin von Kantzow listened, and noted the seriousness of this young man who had dropped down from out of the sky with her brother-in-law to capture her empty heart. She was a woman whose life since marriage to a dashing young Swedish officer over ten years earlier had been made completely unhappy, although she herself had a capacity for happiness and for making others happy as great as was in any woman. For years she had been estranged from her husband and her life was empty, save for her young son Thomas, whom she adored and who to her had come to be the object of all her love. Now this dashing young German had appeared and her spirit found in his its mate.

.

From time to time, at Rockelstad and at other people's houses, Hermann Göring and Carin von Kantzow met. They knew instinctively that in the one reposed the other's destiny. The woman knew that if she married Göring, she would be not only marrying the man, tempestuous, wayward, and sincere, at times imperious, at others slavish in his devotion to her, but she must be prepared to serve as wife and as mother to a cause—the rebuilding of Germany.

For over ten years this Nordic woman was destined to be the spur to effort, a star to light the way, and a

hood threw back the challenge to the energetic man. She was the fitting mate for a fighter. She could encourage, caution, advise, and warn. She saw in him what perhaps he then did not know. She realized his dormant ability and urged him on.

Although of great spiritual strength, her health was fragile to the point of semi-permanent invalidism, yet she did not hesitate when the hour came to throw in her lot with one whom she knew to be not well-off and who measured a political career against a soft job, yet took the first. She knew that she would have to live in an alien land among strangers. She was aware that she must divorce her first husband with its attendant pain. Yet when Göring asked her definitely to come with him to Germany as his wife, the answer came readily enough.

The divorce, her continual ill-health, and the seemingly ceaseless poverty of the Görings' early married years, were to her a heavy burden. The uncomplaining manner in which she carried this burden to her grave earned her the respect of everyone who came to know this saintly woman. She brought a wealth of meaning into the life of her husband, and her character and encouragement illumined his whole future. She was an idealist, and more often than not lived in the past rather than this actual hard matter-of-fact world of ours, where fortunes change hourly like the tides.

If Göring, as a youth, dreamed of himself as Götz von Berlichingen, returned to Germany to do doughty deeds, then Carin Göring saw herself as Brunhilde, reincarnated to strike a blow for the rebirth of the Nordic spirits of Europe. It was she who kindled the spark which burst into flame between 1923 and 1933 and who suffered, in order to sustain her husband, that modern Lohengrin, the man who lives a thousand years too late, yet whose credo may either shake or still the chancellories of

Europe—Hermann Göring, to-day wielding far greater power over German people than ever the German Emperors could command.

Germany, wrapt in a mixture of stern reality and fairy tales, came to understand this pair, while we in England know nothing of them save the blustering, dictatorial outward expressions of Göring's will. In many of his so outspoken utterances he is cloaking the memory of her and of her suffering, who inspired and sustained him, in what must have appeared to him, as Germany's darkest hour—1918 to 1932—when forty or fifty parties took the hustings, to win, for their own ends, the vote of the German electorate; parties hating, yet willing to bow the knee to the inscrutable, nodding, but never quite sleeping, Wotan from the East-Prussian marshes—Hindenburg the indomitable—the regent of the Hohenzollern and the servant of the Weimar Republic—grotesque thought to men of the Göring breed; an old and honoured servant of an Imperial Master, doing his best to look both ways. A Prussian War Lord enthroned upon the seat of Frederick the Great, to be removed only by the caprice of death to make way for a simple soldier of his late Imperial Majesty's Army—Hitler.

That same Hitler knows better than any man in the Third Reich the value of Carin Göring to his cause.

Another sister of Carin's, Fanny, had married a German, Count Richard von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, years before, and had gone to live in the military atmosphere of pre-war Potsdam. Little did the sisters then think that for both of them their future was to be so inextricably wrapped up in Germany and her destiny—on the merry festivities of Fanny's brilliant wedding neither thought that the one would give her husband to a Germany about to commit military and political suicide and that the other would be called upon to offer up her own life upon the altar of Germany's rebirth.

haven from the bitterness of disappointment, in Hermann Göring's life. She was born Carin von Fock, the fourth daughter of a Swedish colonel, Baron Karl von Fock, on 21 October 1888. Her mother's maiden name was Huldine Beamish, who came from an English family which had settled in Ireland near Queenstown. While Carin von Fock thus had an English grandfather, who, incidentally, had been an officer in the Coldstream Guards in his early life, her maternal grandmother was Swedish, the daughter of Professor Mosander, who succeeded Berzelius, the famous classifier of heterogeneous catalysis, at the Royal Academy of Science in Stockholm.

The Focks had been soldiers since the days of the Crusaders. Originally German, coming from Westphalia, they were then called von Brucken. They were granted estates in Curland and ultimately the Swedish Queen Christina admitted them to the Swedish nobility. During the reign of Charles XII there was a von Fock in command of the Royal Helsing Regiment, and Carin's father commanded the Regiment until his retirement. As in all Scandinavian families, Carin was taught to cook, sew, and to discharge the household duties generally. Like many old families, they had tradition, but not too much cash in hand, consequently, their domestic staff was limited. This gave to Carin the opportunity of becoming skilled in the arts of the kitchen. Often she gave a helping hand in the washing-up. This aptitude for cooking proved a great stand-by in later years, when with only a few marks in the Göring household exchequer, she cooked satisfying dishes for Hitler and his lieutenants when they were tired and hungry after hours of scheming, electioneering, and meetings; when money was short but hopes high. By the very nature of her environment, upbringing, and emotional make-up, she was the ideal companion for a man like Göring. Her intense woman-

72 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

Thus it is. The greatest happiness, in families and in nations, is linked up with the greatest sacrifice and tragedy.

About this time photos of her appeared in the newspapers describing her as the most beautiful woman in Sweden. Authors and artists were her friends, attracted to her home by her fine tastes and the atmosphere surrounding her.

.

News from Germany became blacker and more ominous. The worst elements and the best struggled for supremacy. At last the conscience of the people was pricked—many began to desert the parties with Communistic tendencies, but they could not yet find any leader who could offer hope or movement which promised any help at reconstruction. It was true that English and American financiers were pouring money into the industrial life of the country to set the wheels of industry again in motion. Their motives, however, were purely business. It was ex-enemy capital which brought about a revival in German export trade and thus upset the balance of international trade by the dumping abroad of German-made goods.¹ It was foreign capital which rebuilt the German merchant marine to such a scale that its competition is now complained of bitterly by British ship-owners.

Nothing can keep Göring in Scandinavia any longer. He arranges with Carin that he will return to his own

¹ The writer knows personally a steel magnate in the Ruhr who, when approached by an American finance trust with a view to participation in his company, which was of course to be 'rationalized,' was told that no less a sum than 4,000,000 dollars was necessary. He himself estimated that 1,000,000 dollars would have been adequate new capital. The result was an inflated capitalization and the factory became the wonder of the district. Much of the surplus American capital went by way of donations and grants-in-aid to many of the Nazi party militant organizations.

country, there to prepare a home for her against the divorce being made absolute and her remarriage to him. The love between these two was not an everyday affair—both were unusual people, she with her half-Irish sadness and half-Swedish love for myth and saga, he with his determination to be in the struggle to free Germany from the ‘fettters of Versailles’ and to destroy the parties. From the earliest of the post-war years Göring’s mind was made up. He would see a new, strong Germany. At no time and in no country has there been a man more dogged than he, ill-equipped with political arguments as he was in the beginning. Downright force was the only argument that he knew, and this he utilized to the full. It was a desperate throw in difficult times in a country in which all balance had been lost.

From 1919 Germany was fulfilling her traditional role in history—she was back again wallowing in despair and watching each year for a deliverer.

The world was about to see the ushering-in of a new epoch—probably the most interesting and important development of the twentieth century—the divorce between the Germans and Jewry.

.

The Göring wedding took place in Munich. Friends of the bride and brother officers of the groom gave it a military atmosphere. The Germans are more ardent than the English in the demonstration of their patriotism, and by now it had become apparent to the guests that Göring was going to become a ‘political soldier.’ Several of his comrades-in-arms, who were with him in the last days of the war, were there to urge him on, just as they are still with him now on his immediate personal staff. Everywhere in the Nazi hierarchy of to-day are to be found men whose talents he has observed and

74 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

whose loyalty through the last twenty years he has come to value.

The Görings went to live in a small hunting-lodge, at Hochkreuz near Bayrischzell in Bavaria. There, overlooking the pleasant valley, flanked by steeply wooded slopes of the Wendelstein, Grosser Traithen, and Seeberg, the couple found a peaceful haven from the strife. The wife was able to recuperate her health in the clean, pure air of the mountains; the husband cleared his brain from the fog of misery enveloping his country. The close proximity of nature swept away sorrows and encouraged them with hopes.

Hermann Göring turned to his country's history and he found, as he himself has said: 'that when the German genius had raised the people into a cultural and commercial supremacy over other nations, it was the lying and craftiness of the present-day Germans, the laziness of their hearts, and the self-satisfied *bourgeois* manner of living that was capable only of inheriting, and not earning, the tradition of the past.' His nation had sunk speedily and without resistance into a mediocrity still deeper through its sly and haggling petty activities. It had been said that 'the German knows how to die but he does not know how to live.' Göring knew it to be true!

Because he had come to the conclusion that Germany could never recover completely under the rulership of the people in Berlin, maintained there by a hastily and ill-conceived constitution—because he found no romanticism in lawyers' clerks and artisans governing the empire of the Kaisers—in short, because he hated the Black, Red, and Gold banner of the Republic, he felt instinctively that there were many thousands in Germany who thought and felt as he did. But how to contact these thousands and where to find them. While he was pondering the problem and posing himself these awkward

questions, there were others unknowingly putting into action his dreams. Franz Seldte had organized a body of ex-service men in Hanover and had named them 'Stahlhelm'; the notorious Captain Ehrhardt had collected around him a number of young ex-officers, unemployed and ripe for any mischief, and had formed the 'Brigade Ehrhardt,' which posed as a flying-squad of liberators and adopted the twelfth-century methods of the *Femgericht*;¹ Captain Roehm, a brilliant soldier and organizer, but of doubtful habits and morals, by his ability and reputation had become the head of yet another organization, the 'Reichskriegsflagge.' Of all these organizations, one and one only had reputation. That was Seldte's 'Stahlhelm,' founded by a committee of ex-service men, all of whom had fought in the front line, and membership was restricted to old soldiers and to the sons of old soldiers.

In international standing it later became equivalent to the British Legion, with aims somewhat similar, with the one exception that its members wore a uniform patterned on the old Imperial Army and went to annual camps.

In Munich Göring heard of a strange prophet crying in the wilderness. Adolf Hitler. Somehow, though, he did not like the name of this man's party, 'The National Socialist Workers' Party of Germany.' Had not their ilk brought his country to its present pass? Were not the Majority-Socialists ruling from Berlin workers? Still, he thought, the German workman was not a bad sort. The German soldier was a decent enough fellow, and after all, the soldier was from the same clay as the

¹ A self-constituted court, dispensing lynch-law in the name of the Emperor, but invariably without his authority. It met, not as is commonly supposed at night and in caves, but in the open air, usually under a tree. The proceedings of the court were kept secret and led to such abuses that the clergy led a great outcry against their continuance towards the fifteenth century. No case was taken up which was not punishable by death. Accused persons, once condemned, were hanged out of hand.

76 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

workman. Besides ! Ah, he had it. During his preparatory-school days at Fürth he had lodged with a teacher in a working-class district and he had got on well with all of them there. He decided that when next he was in Munich he would go to a meeting of this man Hitler's party and see and hear what it was all about.

.

On a Sunday in October 1922 a great demonstration was held in Munich on the Königsplatz. Here men of all opinions of political thought had forgathered to protest against the allied demand that the former German generals should be handed over for trial as 'War Criminals.' To this demonstration Hermann Göring was drawn by his natural instincts as a patriot and as an ex-soldier.

He appeared in uniform and was everywhere recognized as the last commander of the Richthofen squadron. Fame such as had been his does not disappear overnight. In the square stood many platforms—a party for this and a party for that, each surrounded by its own supporters and a sprinkling of people drawn to it out of curiosity. From one to the other Göring wandered, finding no affinity with the speeches he heard. Talk and more talk.

Approaching a large group of men assembled around a placard marked N.S.D.A.P. propped against the colonnades of Munich's historic thoroughfare he heard a shout : 'Hitler, Hitler, speech, speech !' This, then, was the National Socialist Workers' Party of Germany. Till now this man Hitler was mirrored in Göring's mind as a meaningless tub-thumper, a mystical fanatic, as the popular newspapers called him. No one took him seriously. His interest by now thoroughly aroused, he pressed forward to get a closer view of the oracle. He saw Hitler, face to face for the first time. With

eyes for no one around him, looking over the crowd, his face set and stern, he raised his hand and shook his head in a gesture of negation. Göring heard him say: 'I will not speak to-day. I do not desire to disturb this demonstration. If I spoke, my words would only disrupt the unity which you see here to-day. Unity on a question of generals. If I spoke now, what I have to say would blast the civil peace and that I do not wish to do. Our position in Germany to-day has nothing to do with generals, our work is with Germany. You people who stand in this square are as patient as the Red Government, which has allowed our disgrace and shame to come about (to allow this problem of war-criminals to be discussed), is guilty.'

Göring had found the man. That day he went up to his mountain home and told his wife of the strong impression that Hitler had made upon him, and he wrote in his diary: 'I have found the leader to German freedom.' Far into the night he talked, firing his wife with his hopes. 'One must start a revolution, having as its outcome a new order. Not a workers' revolution, nor a peasants' revolution, nor a coup of the military, but a revolution which is real, in which the general will rise side by side with the workman, the burgher, and the peasant. A revolution that constructs and not destroys—that will be the real German revolution.' Patiently, his wife listened, but a fear took hold of her. This man of hers was reckless—where would his intense hatred of the Republic lead him? What was one man against the nation? Cleverly she was able through the years to keep his fuming anger in check. She nursed his ideas until each became constructive. She was afraid of the destruction the operation of incomplete plans would cause. The next day Göring had made up his mind to offer his services to Hitler in any capacity, however lowly. 'He is the man,' he reiterated to his

78 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY.

wife. 'His destiny is that of Germany. I am sure.' There and then he went down to Munich and spoke with Hitler. He joined the Nazi movement, and it was he as much as Hitler who made the Nazi revolution possible. The date was 12 October 1922, a red-letter day in Hermann Göring's life and in the history of Germany. From thence onward he has played the Cromwell to Hitler's Fairfax, and risen to power in the land.

By the end of 1922 Adolf Hitler had become news. In three years he had become from being just the seventh member of the German Workers' Party, holding sporadic meetings in the beer-houses of Munich, the dominant factor in the National Socialist Workers' Party of Germany. Why? Because he knew how to attract the masses. Because he knew the causes of their poverty and played upon their feelings and emotions as a great musical conductor does upon the individual instrumentalists in a great orchestra, merging them into an entity. This was the secret of the great symphony *Freiheit* played, not upon instruments, but upon the souls and consciences of nearly seventy million people in Germany. Hitler was the embodiment of all German yearnings. Through the years he gave shape and form to the inchoate. He had a plan and that plan could enable Germany (although he was not yet a German) to rise Phoenix-like from her ashes of defeat and poverty. At his meetings he inveighed against the Jews, the Marxists, the social democrats, the French atrocities in the occupied areas, and the reparations.

He harked back to Schiller, Goethe, and other great worthies of German thought, and he goaded the people into a state of frenzy at his meetings, by telling them that they were not fit to be mentioned in the same breath unless they were prepared to fight to make their

land free from foreign oppression and intervention. His plan would break the 'Fetters of Versailles.' Adolf Hitler was determined to have power and his mind was made up that this power would be wielded by him in a greater Germany, untrammelled, and embracing all the German-speaking districts and peoples.

Directly after the war secessionist tendencies were rampant in Southern Germany, which had never been over-tolerant of the Prussian. It was this tendency that broke the German Workers' party out of which Hitler formed the Nazi party proper. At one meeting of the German Workers' party, a resolution was tabled for the secession of Bavaria from the Reich and a consortium arranged with Austria as a member State, superimposed upon which was to be the Wittelsbach dynasty. Hitler threw down the gauntlet and asked why Bavaria should break away from the Reich. If the red criminals in Berlin had overrun the country, why not throw them out? Union with Austria, yes; that had touched a cord in him, but he was not going to have his imperial plan spoiled by a handful of secessionists refusing to fight for its heritage. Shamefacedly, the secession-mongers withdrew. Hitler, with the aid of a young engineer-economist Gottfried Feder, then proceeded to build the Nazi party on the still smouldering ruins of the Workers' party, so recently disrupted by the admirers of a Wittelsbach kingdom. Attendances at meetings grew from 200 to 2000, thence onward to 10,000 and 15,000, all of whom paid good German money to hear Hitler speak. Incidentally, Hitler must be the first politician who, seeking the favours of the electorate, charged them for an explanation of his policy. A policy later printed as the basis of the party and known as the 'twenty-five points,' and which, when wet from the Press, was accompanied by the *pronunciamiento*: 'This is our determined and unalterable

80 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY
programme.' Since 1933 it has not been heard of. The Third Reich had other and better fish to fry.

These meetings of Hitler, out of which much contention arose, not unnaturally required keeping in order. In the early days of the movement, the police were not over-anxious to intervene in any political brawl, in addition to which, as these meetings were more often than not held in halls, the problem of enclosed premises arose. In Germany, as well as in other countries, the chief of police trod warily when incidents causing 'carpetings' were likely to arise. As the size of these meetings grew, the opposition from all camps came to 'barrack' and a quiet meeting became the exception rather than the rule. Consequently, a system of ushers, called *Ordnergruppen*, actually strong-arm men, grew up in the Nazi movement, and their chief occupation was the forcible ejection of militant dissentients. Branches sprang up in town and village throughout Southern and Central Germany, and in 1922 Hitler had conceived the idea of incorporating these apparently innocuous 'ushers' into a 'Protection Corps.' He had also come to realize that to impress his policy more vividly upon the people, force and colour were needed. Force was provided by the 'Protection Corps' arrayed in brown shirts, breeches, and field-boots, and drapings and banners formed the requisite colourful background. As the Nazi movement was a crusade, it had to have a banner, and the now well-known standard, black swastika imposed upon a white disc in a field of red, emerged, to become ten years later the official flag of the German Nation.

These ushers, converted into a protection corps, grew in numerical strength, the uniform naturally attracted many whose political philosophy was yet unformed. A commander was required for these men, who had to be above all an example to them, and at the same time

a spur to their effort. Such a man had to possess great personal courage coupled with organizing experience and ability beyond the ordinary. Adolf Hitler knew that such a man could be found only from among the war-time submarine commanders and air-aces, for these men had not only carried their lives in their hands, but by the very nature of their difficult occupations had been possessed of the highest organizing capacity. Every risky hazard undertaken had to be well thought out beforehand by a calculating brain trained in strategy.

The German people to-day believe that the meeting of Göring with Hitler in 1922 was no mere coincidence and look upon it as divinely inspired, just as they think of Hitler as a 'Messiah.' Judged by results and measured by the yard-stick of stern reality, it was the luckiest day of Hitler's life. For here was the man whom he had been seeking. Here was the commander of his protection corps.

.

Göring was appointed immediately. His was the duty to co-ordinate the men into an efficient corps, and all through the long and difficult winter the close association of Göring with his newly found leader developed into a personal friendship. They became inseparable. Together they sought for and found reliable men for key positions. They travelled far and near, planning and inspecting new formations and party groups, and it became the practice for Göring to open a meeting with Hitler as the main speaker. This had the desired psychological result. Peasant, student, soldier, workman, and small tradesman—none could resist the appeal of the dashing air-ace, and when the time came for Hitler to expound his policy, the audience had become comfortably ensconced in their seats, receptive to the last degree.

82 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

The Görings' home became the meeting-place of the leaders of the party. There new activities, new hopes, and schemes were planned. Carin Göring, between her sewing, painting, and embroidery, provided refreshments for the visitors, many of whom had little food each day. The early days of the Nazi movement were ones of emergency rations. Within a month or two, under Göring's direction, the protection corps of the Nazi party had become transmogrified into the 'Sturm Abteilungen' of the N.S.D.A.P., the storm troops of the movement, and these became universally known as S.A. men. It had been decided to convert the party into a fighting movement having as its aim the destruction of all other parties. No secret was made of this intention and wires hummed between Munich and Berlin. The military governor was getting nervous.

On 28 January 1923 a great mass-meeting was held on the Marsfeld. At this meeting the S.A. made its first official appearance in formation. Hitler was its soul and Göring its brain and strong right arm. In military formation this private army was solemnly inspected by Hitler, who presented it with a new banner. Göring was publicly invested with the rank of Führer der Sturm Abteilungen (Leader of the Storm Divisions). From now on the Nazi cause came to be invested with an almost religious meaning. At this meeting ten thousand voices took up the singing of the old Dutch anthem, 'Lord make us free,' and marched off the field, Carin Göring among them, through the streets of Munich to another meeting in the '*Münchener Kindl*,' a beer-house famous and known to every English visitor. A study of the Nazi revolution discloses a singular affinity by Hitler's followers for places of popular refreshment. Which shows sound psychology in the organizers, for what better accompaniment to a two-hour speech can be provided than a glass or series of glasses of beer.

Real notice was by now being taken of the Hitler movement. Leading articles were appearing in the German national Press, raising a variety of questions. Was National Socialism constructive—was it Socialistic or Nationalistic—or was it only the product of despair?

Foreign correspondents who sent despatches to their head offices about this time were severely castigated by their editors for wasting their paper's money on telephone calls and cables, and the world rolled by, sublimely indifferent to the men who were hatching schemes to set it by the ears ten years later.

Then began the battle of the slogans. 'Patience is the key to success,' Hitler has been known to declare. He followed this up by 'All cultural values, artistic, scientific, and technical, have been produced by Aryans.' This theme was taken up and thrown across the length and breadth of Germany by every follower of his movement. Everyone repeated it over and over again until they came to believe it. Every small German tradesman brooded over this until he came to remember how he had been swindled by some wholesaler in Berlin, Hamburg, Frankfort, or Leipsig, who, due to the peculiar processes of the mind and the effect of propaganda, had become of course a Jew. He might have been, he probably was, but the small tradesman, at first not sure, by the sheer dinning of this slogan into his ears, soon became convinced that he most decidedly was Jewish. But he had to go on trading with this particular wholesaler for none other had such good wares to offer. However, he could wait for the dawn of the Third Reich.

.

Meanwhile, the Quai d'Orsay was carrying on a verbal war with the Wilhelmstrasse. Germany was not keeping up with her reparation agreement. French soldiers marched into the Ruhr and the Ebert Govern-

ment carried on a policy of passive resistance. Conference succeeded conference. Some argument took place over a supply of telegraph poles and pit props not delivered on time to the French and more troops occupied more West German cities. The roar of factories in Germany's great industrial area became stilled—the mine workers refused to go down the pits for the French bailiffs, and more than one hundred thousand German workers were expelled from the territory owing to their attitude of refusing work. Many hundreds of prominent industrialists were arrested and thrown into prison by the French authorities, notable among them being Fritz Thyssen and Hugo Stinnes. To finance this policy of negation in the Ruhr, exigency made war on reason, and a veritable landslide took place in German currency. If Europe complains of Hitler in 1938, it must bear the blame, for, but for its attitude in 1923, the Nazis would not have come to power in 1933. The policy of the French War Ministry created martyrs for the Nazi cause, one of whom, Schlageter, shot for defending a German woman from assault by a French coloured soldier, is deified by the Third Reich to the extent of being given a day among the saints in the German calendar, 26 May. In August the mark sank to a billionth part of its parity value and the French gave up and marched out of the Ruhr almost as suddenly as they had gone in.

A coalition of the many parties in the Reichstag took place and the Reichswehr marched into Saxony to overthrow Zeigners' Government, which was downright Communistic, and which had run counter to the Weimar constitution. Meanwhile, elements in Munich were conspiring to keep their hand in practising stabs in the back, of which so much complaint had been heard. While Berlin was busy in quarrelling with Paris, Bavaria was planning to break away from the constitution. For some while she had refused to take orders from Berlin,

and von Kähr, the Bavarian General States Commissioner, had played with an idea for several months. The idea was nothing less than using Hitler's movement to declare a dictatorship and to march on Berlin. He had thought merely to use the Hitler movement, not to be, as he was to find later, subordinate to it.

While all this was boiling, the Görings had moved from Bayrischzell to a small villa in Obermenzing near Nymphenburg on the outskirts of Munich. It was newly built and none had lived in it before, so Carin Göring was able to make the household arrangements personal to her own tastes. These were some of the happiest days of their lives. Days filled with the building of a home and made brighter by the wonderful feeling that comes to one in being able to buy some little thing 'for just the right place.' With very little money the house was made a home. The two Görings both had good colour tastes and sense of form, and everything about the rooms was visible expression of them. He would come rushing home from town with a last-minute purchase under his arm, and with the storm brewing about them, likely to break over their heads at any moment, they laughed their way through the summer days like a couple of children. An atmosphere sprang up around their home into which everyone in the Nazi headquarters was drawn. In the basement of their home was a large, comfortable *Herrenzimmer*, a study, a real man's den, with large open fireplace and old German furniture. This room witnessed much of the planning of the November 'Putsch.' Here, on many a long evening sat Adolf Hitler, Herman Esser, Dietrich Eckart, Ernst (Putzi) Hanfstaengl with Göring, often talking over their war-time experiences. The serious conversations over, Hitler would recount some of his dry jokes, while

86 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY,
Hanfstaengl¹ would play German *Volkslieder* upon the piano.

Daily conditions became worse, and Bavaria, because of its fight against the Government in Berlin, attracted to its capital all the reactionary leaders from Prussia. In Coburg they rallied. The S.A. men of Hitler, the 'League of Young Germans,' the freebooters of Ehrhardt, the 'Oberland Front,' and Roehms' 'Reichskriegsflagge' all on mischief bent against the central authority. Ehrhardt had just come out of jail and was travelling about on a faked passport given to him by the Munich police. Squads of these men marched into disused barracks and factories, cleaned them out, and quartered themselves there against the day they were to march on Berlin.

Bavaria was again longing for the Wittelsbach; Bavaria had also a strong Communistic section. 'Long life to our Prince,' and 'The Soviet lives' were bandied about in the same street in the same town by the same citizens who used to sing with fervour 'Heil Dir im Siegerkranz' as the Emperor passed by. Catholic Bavaria was nearly 'red,' and Adolf Hitler became the hero of the hour, and it was about now that the 'Heil Hitler' salute became the daily greeting.

¹ Ernst Hanfstaengl was one of the most cultured men of the Nazi revolution. The son of the famous art and music publishers in Munich bearing his name and having a branch in London before 1914, he was educated at Harvard, where he acquired some reputation as an oarsman. For years he was the 'Pressechef' and 'Verbindungsstab' of the N.S.D.A.P. (Press chief and liaison officer of the Nazi party), and many English people have good cause to be thankful to him for his ever-willing assistance during the difficult days in 1932-3. A word from him opened many doors. He was a subject of several High Court actions in England a year or two ago, when he brought suit against several leading English dailies. In 1934 he edited a collection of caricatures of Hitler from the foreign Press, called *Tat gegen Tinte: Hitler in der Karikatur*, which was passed by Hitler for publication in Germany. The intentions of the book were to show that the German Chancellor was impervious to foreign opinion, the title in English meaning: 'Deed against Ink.' In 1937, Putzi Hanfstaengl (as he is affectionately called by his English diplomat and journalist friends) suddenly disappeared from the German official scene.

General Ludendorff entered the lists on the side of Hitler and added his military rank to the Nazi movement. He shouted louder than any, but when danger threatened did the least of all. He was a doubtful asset. His own pet theories were apt to cloud the issue of a National Socialist Germany envisaged by Hitler and Göring. He brought in his pagan views, which rather shocked the devout Bavarians. 'Germany has won the war,' he was wont to declare, 'but has been prevented from receiving her due acknowledgment by a conspiracy of Jews, Freemasons, Socialists, and Catholics.' With Bavaria solidly behind him, he told many a meeting, he would clear the French out of the occupied areas, and by an attack on Russia he would destroy the power of the Soviets. The streets of Munich resounded with cries of 'Down with Ebert,' 'Down with Berlin.'

Friedrich Ebert, President of the Reich, sitting in Bismarck's room in the Wilhelmstrasse became worried. Troubles would never cease. He was just rounding off the difficulties with the French when he was confronted with the prospects of a 'Putsch' in Bavaria. He took a leap into the unknown. He vested the chief of the recently organized Republican Army (the Reichswehr), General Hans von Seeckt, with extraordinary powers and waited. It was a dangerous thing to do. How did the Reichswehr feel towards the Republic? No one really knew, but they were mainly old imperial officers, and might well be awed by the brilliant Ludendorff, who after all was in the opposing camp.

The answer Bavaria gave to Berlin was to declare a state of emergency. The Munich Government granted to Dr. Gustav von Kahr, its General State Commissioner, the powers of a dictator. Kahr was a typical *Beamter*, one of a long line of Bavarian state officials—a real Jack-in-office, nervous of responsibility, and the assumption of the right to use so great an initiative as his new

88 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

orders gave. One thing alone joined him to Hitler and Göring—he was a self-declared enemy of the Republic. Shrewd, reasonably intelligent, of no imagination, and vain to the point of effeminacy, he ran with the hare and hunted with the hound. He gave many orders and cancelled most. Any scheme which promised personal advancement he readily gave ear to.

General von Lossow was appointed to the command of the Reichswehr in Bavaria, and in October 1923 he took the oath from them, not to the Reich, but to the Bavarian State. Berlin, taking umbrage at this departure from orthodoxy, asked for von Lossow's punishment, but the Bavarians ignored the request. Von Seeckt sent orders to von Lossow which the latter acknowledged but conveniently forgot to execute, for great doings were afoot and his time was occupied with far weightier matters. He was engaged in a conspiracy against the Government of the Reich, the same Reich from which he held his commission and in whose name he was supposed to wield his military authority. Bavaria was about to challenge the remainder of the Reich.

At the same time red revolution broke out in Saxony, spreading rapidly over into Thuringia; people began to talk about a civil war between north and south. State sent to state notes couched in the most inflammatory tones, and on 26 October von Kahr openly refused to recognize or obey the Reichs Government. Here was open revolt. Hitler was busily engaged addressing meetings throughout Bavaria and Göring was marshalling his forces and planning with his staff. Back in his headquarters in Munich, Hitler received special couriers from all the anti-Soviet powers in Europe. It was as if the bees were swarming around the queen in the new hive. From St. Briac in far-distant France, the Grand Duke Cyril, senior surviving descendant of the Romanovs and self-styled Tsar of All the Russias, sent a war-worn

General Bisupsky to act as liaison officer, while Benito Mussolini commissioned his blackshirt captain, Migliorati, to call and present his good wishes. 'The Prime Minister of Bulgaria wished him God-speed, and envoys from Austria, Hungary, Rumania, and Czechoslovakia called upon him, to make overtures against the day when he would be the head of a new non-Socialist Reich. America even began to look to Munich sympathetically. Certain Swedish military sections assured Hitler of aid, and the Finns intimated their willingness to join an anti-Soviet bloc led by a Hitler Germany.

Shortage of food caused riots to break out everywhere in Germany, and the winter looked black. Von Kahr prevented the Reichsbank gold from being removed from the vaults in Nuremberg and Berlin waxed furious, but as yet did nothing.

Von Kahr and von Lossow went into the Hitler camp and long discussions were held. Hitler wanted action—he considered that further suffering could not be endured by the people—the position could not be worse. Göring reported that his men were ready, the dashing Roehm announced that his men were fractious and wanted action, Weber of the 'Oberland' declared that his men would wait no longer. General von Lossow approved of an immediate march on Berlin, and Seisser, the chief of the Bavarian State Police, was ready to commit himself, providing he was assured that the others were going to be in it up to their necks.

Hitler in summing up the situation saw how favourable the position was. In addition to the many thousands of auxiliary formations from the political groups which had joined up with him, he was assured of the active support of the military and the police. With the Bavarian Reichswehr on his side and Ludendorff with him, it was not unreasonable for him to assume that, as they were met with, on the march to Berlin, other military

units would come over to his banner. At the time he was entitled to assume that, having regard to all the factors in his favour, no German soldier would fire upon a fellow soldier; he was also entitled to assume that all the Reichswehr, their tradition being what it was, would be anti-Republican! Finally he was justified in thinking that the people would support him in his role as liberator.

.

Hermann Göring's attendance at all these meetings between Hitler and the Bavarian authorities was vitally necessary in his capacity as chief of the militant section of the Nazi movement. Yet his wife lay ill in bed at their home not far away in Obermenzing, stricken with acute inflammation of the lungs. With a high temperature running she could not say much, but she knew that great things were afoot. For several days he was hardly able to spare a few moments for her, but on 8 November he managed to find a little time to sit with her in her room and tell her about the plans. "To-day will be a busy one. To-night we have our final meeting in the Bürgerbräu Keller and I shall be late home. Everything will be all right though." His wife wished him good luck, and with him gone settled down to worry, as all wives do who are interested in their husbands' work. Göring was worried too, for he felt that he should be home, but crucial moments in his whole career were demanding his complete attention. His wife's permanent indifferent health was a source of great worry to him and urged him on to greater things so that he could ensure more comfort and luxuries for her.

.

At 8.30 in the evening of 8 November 1923 Adolf Hitler proclaimed the new Germany before a crowded

meeting in⁶ the Bürgerbräu Keller in Munich. On the platform Hermann Göring and Rudolf Hess stood immediately behind Hitler, while General von Lossow, Dr. von Kahr, and the other supporters of the new Germany, all looking very embarrassed, arranged themselves in a typical photographer's group. The Prime Minister of Bavaria, von Knilling, had just been arrested, and General Ludendorff waited apart from the crowd, nervous and afraid of his part in the whole transaction. Von Kahr stepped forward and read his address to the 'German people and the Nation,' and upon its conclusion stepped up to Hitler and before the assembled patriotic societies shook him heartily by the hand.

A 'proclamation to all Germans' was drawn up, signed in the names of the provisional National Government by Hitler, Ludendorff, von Lossow, and Seisser. Von Kahr was to be the Regent of Bavaria, Ludendorff Regent of the Reich, and Hitler was to be Reichs Chancellor.

The meeting broke up with the singing by the assembled multitude of *Deutschland über alles!* The more rowdy elements went and broke all the windows of the Socialist newspaper offices in Munich; the organizers attended to the despatch of telegrams throughout the world announcing the new Government, and lorries containing storm troops rumbled through the night into Munich. While from Ingolstadt, Landshut, Coburg, and other towns in which storm troops had been concentrated, the long files of brown-clad men began their march on Berlin. From many other towns no movement took place. The sectional leaders had a sudden respect for the Republic.

Meanwhile, von Kahr, who had planned a secessionist rising for 12 November, put into execution his sly plan. He hastily contacted the Catholic bishop of Munich-Freising, Prince Rupprecht of Wittelsbach and several

of his own ministers. The general dislike for Ludendorff expressed by all these men resulted immediately, at two o'clock in the morning, in the radio-station in Munich telling Germany and the world that any alleged participation by von Kahr, von Lossow, and Seisser was explained as having been obtained at the revolver point.¹ The Nazi party hastily pasted posters on the walls of the town: 'Power is in the hands of the new Government. Ludendorff, von Kahr, von Lossow, and Seisser are with us. (Signed) Adolf Hitler.'

On the morning of the fateful 9 November the weather was dull. Hitler heard that three of the new heads of his Government had gone back on their word and had linked up with the Ebert Government. Despite his setback, Hitler decided to let the people declare themselves and just before noon the march through the streets of Munich began. In regular military order, headed by Hitler, Göring, and Ludendorff, the brown-shirts made their way towards the Odeon Platz. The streets presented a strange picture. Armoured cars, artillery, machine-gun sections, and infantry were poured into Munich, and taking up positions in squares, buildings, and on street-corners, awaited events. The notices so recently pasted up had all been torn down or defaced. The people stood about waiting while the unarmed front ranks of demonstrators of Hitler marched solemnly by, singing their party songs. Before the Feldherrenhalle, a strange sight presented itself. In a town supposedly in the hands

¹ Which was technically true, for Hitler had brandished a revolver and fired a shot into the ceiling of the hall, but at the time of signing the proclamation none of these gentlemen required any real persuasion, because of the key positions in the Reich they were about to assume. What really happened was that they knew the Reichswehr Headquarters in Berlin would keep the oath to the Republic and fight. They knew also that Hitler was all for a new constitution for the Reich and was against any form of Bavarian autonomy. Historians will be called upon to unravel the tangled skein of lies and deceit arising out of this abortive revolution, in its relation to German history; at the moment we are too close to the incident to do more than record the facts.

of the marching demonstrators stood rows of Reichswehr supported by machine-guns whose sights were trained on the approaching columns.

Carin Göring was in bed in Obermenzing with a high fever ; her husband was by the side of the man he had chosen to follow to the end. Where would it all end ?

On the corner of Dienerstrasse the front ranks of the marchers presented themselves to the waiting soldiery. To the officers in command of the party before the Feldherrenhalle it mattered little that their one-time idol, Ludendorff, was among the rebels. They were servants of the Republic to which as soldiers they had sworn fealty. They had been ordered to prevent this demonstration and Ludendorff or no Ludendorff, these orders they were going to execute. With drawn swords two Reichswehr officers waited, then as the solid phalanx of brown moved on into the Odeon Platz they shouted : 'Fire.' Immediately the machine-guns spattered their bullets right in among the marching men. A man in a black raincoat, next to Hitler, fell. It was Hermann Göring, a German who had for four years faced enemy bullets for his countrymen, now laid low and swimming in his own blood, from the bullets of Germans, fired from a German gun, the triggers pressed by German soldiers. Soon eighteen rebels were lying about on the ground before the former Residenz of the Wittelsbach, dead or severely wounded. There immediately ensued a maddened stampede by the crowd, and the main body of rebels who were carrying arms threw them down upon the *pavé*.

Neubauer, Ludendorff's batman, threw himself in front of the General and was killed instantly. An armoured car came screaming through the square, firing indiscriminately into the crowd. A little boy of ten fell to the ground bleeding, and Hitler, with his shoulder already broken by a fall, through Scheubner-Richter, who was

94 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY
shot, pulling him down with him, stepped forward and picked him up.

Ludendorff walked steadfastly on towards the soldiers ; respectfully they made way for him and he disappeared among them and the crowd beyond.

Munich telegraphed to Berlin that the crisis was over and that no more troops were needed.

.

Amid all the pandemonium friends of Göring carried him into a shop nearby and roughly bandaged his wounds.

Carin Göring's sister, Fanny, who had been in Munich during the demonstrations and had seen Göring's plight, raced back to the tiny villa in Obermenzing and recounted the events to her sister. That Adolf Hitler was arrested, that Hermann was wounded and among friends, but that an order for his arrest had been issued.

Without thought to her own ill, Carin Göring rose hastily from her own bed of sickness and with two friends of her husband's made for Garmisch, to a hospital where he had been taken under guard. While trying to escape over the frontier into Austria he had been arrested, and police sat watching by his bedside with loaded revolvers.

Then a part of the organization which he himself had conceived came promptly into operation, the ' Underground human railway,' by which wanted Nazis had so often been spirited over the frontier into safety. Two men marched into his room accompanied by his wife. They had ' Orders ' to remove the rebel, Hermann Göring. Wrapped in blankets, Göring, still only half-conscious, was taken by his wife and friends over the frontier to Innsbruck, using a false passport to cross the frontier again.

The house and personal belongings in Obermenzing

were left behind. The Görings had to face the future with empty hands. Repeated hæmorrhage further weakened Göring and his wounds were in danger of becoming gangrenous. The loss of blood would have killed a weaker man. Within a fortnight the leader of the Sturm Abteilungen was busy reorganizing his men, directing operations from his bedside. Secret couriers came over the mountains by unfrequented goat-tracks, and a friend smuggled the smaller valuables from the villa over to Innsbruck. Because of the rigid censorship and obsessed by the fear that all letters addressed to him in the name of Göring, when passing through the German post offices, would be opened, he caused all communications to be sent to him to be wrapped in double envelopes and addressed to Dr. Soppelsa.

The couple did not believe that the National Socialist movement was dead. Their correspondence to their relations and friends at this time contained many messages of hope for the future. They felt that Hitler's cause was not crushed, but that the events of 9 November would go far to add to the strength of the party. Which was true. Thousands in Munich alone, during the month of November, rushed to join the party, and a day and night procession of well-wishers streamed into the hospital at Innsbruck to see the wounded Göring. The members of the Austrian Nazis gave him money and brought presents. The people of the town crowded around his window and cried: 'Heil Göring,' and when the police, who in any case were only half-hearted in their efforts, tried to clear them away there was on several occasions grave danger of the crowd getting out of hand and lynching them. The frontier between Austria and Germany was a veritable stronghold of the Nazis even in 1923.

The pains from his wounds continued to prevent him sleeping, and morphine had to be administered in pretty

stiff doses. Delirium followed and he was back again on the Western front and in scenes of street fighting at home. One by one his friends were arrested, until finally von Kahr issued a warrant for the arrest of Karin Göring. If apprehended she was, of course, to be used as a witness to the conspiracy, for it was common knowledge that she was often present in the study in the house in Obermenzing whenever Hitler and his staff foregathered to discuss the plans of the movement and for the revolt.

On 5 December Göring was in such a pitiable condition that the hospital authorities allowed his wife to live on the premises. He was in the throes of a complete breakdown and his suffering increased, physically and mentally. His wounds became poisonous and it was feared that he would lose a leg up to the thigh. To stifle his cries of pain, he bit on his sheets and pillow-cases, so that his wife should not hear. But she knew, and her sensitive nature received a blow from which it could never properly recover. The shock of those November days undoubtedly hastened her death in 1931. She was even stoned by the anti-Nazis in the streets of Innsbruck, early in December, while walking from her hotel to her husband's hospital. On Christmas Eve Hermann Göring was allowed to leave the hospital. His pains had eased and he could just walk about the room on crutches. His old spirit and energy had left him and his body was emaciated to a shadow of his former self.

In Bavaria, and in the border towns of Austria, 'wanted' notices, complete with photo, had been pasted up on the walls, post offices, police stations and public buildings, and if Hermann Göring's features were not previously familiar to all, by now they had become so. In the newspapers controlled by the von Kahr faction the official notices column announced that anyone giving succour to the Görings, or defacing the notices or other-

wise acting in any way favourable to the Hitler movement, would be instantly arrested and brought before the court. In Munich the von Kahr Government was still not yet sure of itself; no one knew the real strength of the Nazis, and so sensitive had von Kahr himself become that he banned the performance of the opera *Tosca*, because of the theme.

The abortive 'Putsch' had put the whole of the Bavarian Government on tenterhooks and every decree and action was plain indication that it was thoroughly nervous.

By means of a system of couriers Göring wrote to Hitler and Ludendorff asking if it would be in the interest of the National Socialist movement to surrender himself to the authorities. Their answer was what one would have expected. With all the leaders of the movement in jail, he was told, it would be in the general interest if he could rehabilitate the movement as best he could, working from his neutral base.

The Görings spent their Christmas in the Tyroler Hof and they were touched by finding in their room a tiny, lighted Christmas tree, placed there by the storm troops of Innsbruck. This sounds trivial, but to a German it means more than a Christmas turkey or fine spread.

While the Görings sat before their Christmas tree, wrapt in thoughts of what might have been, von Kahr, in Munich, spent his Christmas in his Ministry, surrounded by a threefold barbed-wire entanglement and machine-guns posted, covering all entrances. So acute had become the pro-Hitler feeling that he was obliged to live away from his family because of the receipt of so many letters, all of which threatened his personal safety.

In the last days of December 1923 Hermann Göring was sufficiently recovered to see a lawyer. He was pre-

98 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

paring his case for the recovery of his confiscated property and also jotting down all the leading points for his trial in the event of his being brought to justice for his participation in the November affair. A knowledge of this document discloses that Göring took full blame for the whole of the Sturm Abteilungen. This has always been a trait in his character. Much as one can find incidents aplenty in his career which, if occurring in English politics, could be excused on no parliamentary ground whatever, for these he has always publicly announced his responsibility.

About this time Innsbruck had become a Nazi stronghold to which all the hunted came from across the border. On New Year's Eve Hitler's lawyer visited Göring, and the management of the Tyroler Hof had laid out a table especially for Göring's party. The table was strewn, in the German way, with mistletoe, holly, and evergreen leaves, and German flags, while printed on a huge card was: 'Heil to our hero.' The orchestra played the German national anthem and Göring, his wife, and Hitler's lawyer were fêted like conquerors in the little mountain town. Although the world thought that the Nazi movement was dead, the scene at this New Year's Eve party showed otherwise. Over two hundred telegrams had been received, probably the one having most meaning reading: 'Yours true to death Schellshorn.' This same Schellshorn was Göring's chauffeur in Munich, now unemployed. He had refused an offer of a job from a Jew who owned an old Bavarian castle, because 'he who has had the honour to serve a Göring must feel himself deadly hurt to serve a Semite.' 'I would rather starve than work for a Jew,' the simple man had told his friends. This is a startling commentary on the loyalty of even the lowliest grade in the Nazi movement to Göring. None knew then, in 1924, least of all the simple working man, that the party would even be

revivified, let alone rise to power in the Reich. Whatever its faults (and it has many, like all systems) the Nazi movement became a religion to hundreds of thousands such as Schellshorn, and its leaders were worshipped as its gods.

.

During January and February Göring knew no rest from his labours. He travelled by train and car to outlying spots, conferring with his sectional leaders, who came over the frontier into Austria to consult with him. The work of reorganization went on, while Hitler was in jail awaiting trial. Himself now well enough to work with something like his old fervour, his wife again fell ill and was constantly under the care of nurses.

With this strange woman it seemed as if her own pains had been stilled when her husband needed such close care and attention, only to return when he had been clutched from the grave.

While untiring organization was rebuilding the Nazi party, retribution had overtaken von Kahr in Munich. The Reichs Government had demanded his resignation and he was to stand his trial for high treason with Hitler and the rest. The strength of the movement had increased, in Bavaria alone, by over 500,000 members since the November disappointment, while in Northern Germany the idea of National Socialism had begun to take root. In Thuringia, previously a hotbed of Communism, the voting in the Landtag elections returned eighteen National Socialists out of a total number of forty-one seats in the Diet.

The Görings were experiencing difficulty in raising money with which to pay their hotel bills, and so great was the impression created upon the management of their hotel by this exiled couple that the question of payment altogether was held over. In fact, it was sug-

100 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY
gested that it should be waived entirely. The friendliness of the Austrians made a vivid contrast to his treatment at the hands of his fellow-Germans.

.

In the last week of February the trial of the ring-leaders of the revolt began in the Military Academy in Munich. Hitler, Ludendorff, Roehm, von Kahr, Kreibel, Weber and others whose names are bywords in the National Socialist vocabulary were being tried in person, Göring and two lesser leaders were tried in absence.

The atmosphere was not really that of a court about to try a number of men for high treason. It was a combination of a levée and one of Hitler's meetings. The Judge discussed the points of the prosecution with Ludendorff and Hitler almost as between one friend and another. The people in the court were obviously on the side of the rebels, and the counsel for the Reich appeared to find difficulty in presenting his case. He made no attempt to hide his personal admiration of Hitler and the other defendants, but he apologetically pointed out that the law was the law, and as long as the law was what it was it had to be upheld. The main object of the court and prosecuting counsel appeared to be to pour ridicule upon the poor unfortunate von Kahr, who endeavoured to justify his part in the whole proceedings by explaining that his tacit consent to the *Proclamation to all Germans*, and to which he gave his signature, was all part of a plan to lead Hitler on to commit the offence for which he and his fellow-culprits were now standing trial.

Knowing the nature of things, and certain traits in von Kahr's character, the Judge smilingly indicated that he had heard enough. The trial was one of the greatest occasions for propaganda that Hitler and his movement could have enjoyed. Speeches were allowed which reeked of as much treason against the Weimar republic

as the physical attempt of the 'Putsch' had shown, and, despite his punishment, Hitler emerged with greater publicity than ever he had secured before.

Hitler fought tooth and nail to avoid his lieutenants, followers, and himself from being branded as traitors, and several points of his speech indicated that he relied upon history to substantiate his views: "Was Bismarck a traitor when he dismissed parliament and ruled alone?" he asked, forgetful that the Iron Chancellor was already ruling by the power granted him from the Kaiser. "When Wilhelm I had himself crowned Emperor of Germany, when, before '71, he had been merely King of Prussia, did he act legally?" again forgetting that sovereignty is above the law—in fact, the giver of law.

With many other appeals for the recognition of his movement, he concluded: "I know what your sentence will be. . . . The army we have raised grows day by day, hour by hour. That court high above us will not ask: 'Have you committed high treason?' That court will judge us all; the Quartermaster-General of the old Imperial Army, his officers and soldiers, who have wanted to do their duty as Germans for the people and the Fatherland, who wanted to fight and die. You may doom us a thousand times, and yet the goddess of the eternal court of history will tear to pieces the indictment of the State Prosecutor and the sentence of the court. Her verdict will be acquittal." With that the court proceeded to pronounce judgment, but not before the Quartermaster-General Ludendorff had made his appeal for Hitler. "The man standing before the seat of your judgment stands before history's seat of judgment," he declared in a voice which awed the court. "History's court sends me to Valhalla, not to prison; but if the Nationalist movement fails in Germany her name will be stricken from the roll of nations."

While Göring was being tried, in absence, in Munich, one can well imagine what his feelings were like, tied hand and foot, in Innsbruck. Impetuously he must have walked about the room, looking out of the window, picking up a book or a newspaper only to throw it down with a smothered curse. Glancing at the clock, waiting for the new edition of the newspapers, smiling sardonically, with that upward turn of his lips; glancing at his wife, sighing, laughing abruptly, then, with a quick step over to his wife, smiling down at her, as if to say: 'I am sorry we are like this.'

Throughout the whole of March he waited for the result like a caged lion, and then it came! General Ludendorff was acquitted, but he and Hitler were sentenced to five years' imprisonment in a fortress.

The newspaper account which he read, on coming to Ludendorff's acquittal, reported that the General had said: 'My acquittal is a humiliation, which this uniform and these decorations have not deserved'; whereupon the last commander of the Richthofen squadron threw his paper away in disgust with a muttered string of oaths more befitting the stables than a private room in the Tyroler Hof. So much for the value of the support of the Kaiser's Quartermaster-General.

The German Government made representations to the authorities in Austria to repatriate Göring so that he could undergo his term of sentence. His lawyer made attempts at bringing about an amnesty for him.

If the Görings had been heroes in little Innsbruck until now, this technical imprisonment had raised them something to a level with the exiled Archduke Otto of Austria. From every stationer's shop window picture postcards of Hermann and Carin Göring, marked 'A famous visitor and his wife,' looked out invitingly to the passers-by in the same company as those of young Otto—each at thirty groschen a card.

The Bavarian elections in early April 1924 gave the National Socialists more than half the seats in the Bavarian Diet. Hitler was still in Landsberg-am-Lech fortress, so this result was achieved without his fanatical presence. Before the Nazi deputies could take their seats, however, the movement was proscribed from holding any further meetings.

.

Several times during these difficult months Carin Göring went back to Bavaria. Once or twice she visited Ludendorff at his home at Solln, thinking to obtain financial help for her husband. Each time she came away with one of his typical homilies on patriotism and on how to starve for the Fatherland, but with precious little else. She saw what the others had not noticed. The intuition of the woman saw through the veneer of deceit and humours of the political dilettante.

With the growth of National Socialism in Bavaria, which, if properly taken advantage of at that time, would have made Hitler the head of the leading party in the State Diet and thus the head of the Government, it was thought that no court sentence could operate against the convicted Nazi leaders further. Many thought that the election results would bring amnesty, but the thought was vain. With Hitler and Göring away from party headquarters, the movement was like a flock without the bell-wether, and it was due only to several minor leaders' loyalty and work that the Nazis were retained in anything like a cohesive body.

The crashing mark was saved by the good sense of the German Government, and the London agreement of 1924, commonly known as the Dawes Plan, was signed regulating the scale of German payments. While it imposed a still further weight on the financial resources of the German people, it yet paved the way (although ardent

National Socialists would not admit this) to setting them free from political implications involved in the 'naked' word Reparations. Although the Nazis have attacked Dawes and his agreement, the arrangement in 1924 definitely destroyed for ever the French power of sanctions (of which the Germans have had good cause to complain), and a policy of arbitration was introduced, which, incidentally, made clear the way for various moratoriums through which, present-day Germany cannot deny, it has benefited. Order began to become a possibility where previously caprice reigned; on the new basis hopes were high that a new policy could be built. Because such hopes failed to result in fruition, that is the fault of the German party system which ensued until 1933. A strong opposition is essential to any form of good government, but a State managed as Germany was by four or five coalitions built up out of ten times as many parties, each and all ready to sell the other, their friends and their country for a few thousand marks, can result only in smashing itself as a system or Constitution. The result of the crisis in 1932-3 in Germany was not so much a Nazi victory as the political suicide of the other movements, which went under as a result of their own policies. With the financial resuscitation of the Reich, accompanied by the flood of foreign money as investment in her industries, the wheels of commerce moved more swiftly, and the Ruhr, Westphalia, Saxony, and Silesia began to resume normal industrial activity.

The National Socialist Workers Party of Germany was prohibited in every state of the Reich excepting Thuringia, that same state which had been the birthplace of the Weimar Constitution and which had now disowned it in favour of reaction. Here, in Thuringia, Nazi Ministers held sway and in this province of the *Minnesänger* was mirrored, for the world to see, how Germany would be governed if Hitler won through in the end.

At last the Austrian Government, impressed by the Reich's prohibition of the Nazis, acceded to its request for the extradition of the Görings. Warned of their decision in time, Hermann Göring and his wife packed their few belongings hastily and turned to Italy, which had offered them asylum. In the first week of May they arrived at the Hotel Britannia in Venice and were welcomed by warmth and sunshine of the early Italian summer. With the lilac and fruit trees in bloom, the scent-laden air brought back the natural colour to the pallid cheeks of the two harassed Germans. Göring was at home with the Italian language, but his wife had to make shift with her very indifferent French which still lingered with her from the old pre-war days in the Swedish Legation in Paris, to which her first husband, Lieutenant von Kantzow, had been attached. Living practically on top of the Grand Canal and San Marco Square, they were inspired with the traditions of the ancient city and they managed as best they could on their little remaining money, aided ably by the goodwill of the hotel management which was controlled by a German.

With the passing of the weeks the couple moved on to Rome, through Florence and Siena. Together they planned to return to Sweden via those countries in which the writ of the Reich did not run. Göring brooded over the situation. He was a homeless refugee and his friends were behind bars. This, then, was reward for endeavouring to show his countrymen the way to the new Germany. But still he retained that vision of a new Germany, standing as an equal among the nations. The land of Garibaldi, Mazzini, and Cavour threw down the challenge. What the Italians have done the Germans can do, thought Göring. He gave himself up to a study of the methods of Italian Fascism and of its creator, Benito Mussolini, with whom a deep friendship sprang up.

These two men have much in common to commend each to the other. Both are self-willed and dominant characters and possess the faculty of attracting loyalty from their followers. They both know how to select subordinates to fill appropriate offices. Neither tolerates inefficiency nor counter-intrigue. When discovered it is ruthlessly hunted out of the organization and destroyed.

While Göring was sojourning in hospitable Italy, Hitler, in reasonable comfort, was writing his book, *Mein Kampf*, in the fortress of Landsberg. While Hitler was in prison the German people seemed to be entering upon a new era. The American method of 'rationalization' had come to Germany in the train of Uncle Sam's gold. The Germans, themselves no mean people at industrial efficiency, stood in awe and wonderment, spell-bound in a contemplation of the new factories and factory methods. Even the imported machinery was better than their own. America was no longer the 'Bogy' of 1917-18, stepping, with her long legs, across the Atlantic to win the war. The United States represented to the war- and revolution-sick Germany a new ideal. American influence in German business, from 1925 onwards, was truly a *Wirtschaftswunder*, or, as we would say, economic miracle. Germany was going to reconquer world markets and had no time for reactionaries like S.A. men. Or so they said. The nation of opera themes and fairy-tales became enslaved by the god of the machine.

The Reich, the States of the Confederation, and the municipalities engaged in competition in a spending orgy. To raise the money from which sprang public buildings, welfare organizations, commercial docks, tramways, undergrounds and airports, they hypothecated everything that was in their custody to the financiers. Loans were secured upon the rates, railway earnings and the national

sources of taxation until, now, the simple German really believes that all the outgoings to foreign capital, or rather the interest which accrues due, is still payment on account of war debts.

The decline of National Socialism through Hitler's absence from its leadership saw the rise of another similar movement in Northern Germany. In Mecklenburg the German Racial Liberty Party had sprung up, and, under the leadership of an ex-officer and landowner, Albrecht von Gräfe, it attracted as members many people from the land who had previously kept out of party strife and commotions. Gregor Strasser, once a stalwart henchman of Adolf Hitler, now long since gone from the Nazi scene, moved into Prussia from Bavaria, where he was a National Socialist deputy, and, with the exercise of considerable diplomacy, talked von Gräfe into a merger with the now discredited and proscribed National Socialist Workers Party of Germany. With Hitler still in jail (and likely to be there for nearly five years), the head of the German Racial Liberty Party readily agreed to this merger, because he saw himself as the head of a much stronger organization, and out of this political merger there arose the 'German People's Freedom Movement' (*Deutschvölkische Freiheitsbewegung*).

In Northern Germany, then, this new Liberty movement held the fort for the National Socialist leaders in prison and in exile. During these difficult days, unless Strasser had remained loyal to Hitler, working under cover of his 'Liberty' party in various parts of Germany, the N.S.D.A.P. would have completely disappeared and Hitler along with it.

With the turn of the year 1924-25 Adolf Hitler received a remission of his sentence and was released from Landsberg. He came out into a new world; Ludendorff stood aloof from him and dreamed only of wiping out Bolshevism by the methods of the pamphleteer. Roehm had

108 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY
gone into the wilds of South America to reorganize the Bolivian Army. The lesser lights had been thoroughly frightened by the event of 9 November and Hermann Göring was in exile.

He told his followers, and also wrote in his newspaper, the *Völkische Beobachter* : ' It will take five years before I have reorganized the party.' Public meetings were still forbidden, although he had representatives in the Bavarian and Thuringian Diets. A political paradox arose. He had to wait, and in this waiting time the world witnessed a publishing miracle. His book was finished and on the bookstalls. Millions of copies were sold in Germany, and gradually it was translated and on sale in every foreign country. Hitler had become a world's best-seller. This book, though no literary masterpiece, yet proposed revolutionary ideas, many of which, the international political intelligentsia said, would be killed by their own nature. Time has proved otherwise. Anyhow, this book brought back many into the fold and, peculiarly enough, despite its leitmotiv, attracted an entirely new class of membership in his party—the middle and upper classes.

By the spring of 1925 Carin Göring was anxious to return to her own country. Her mother was passing through a very dangerous state of health and she wished to be by her side. Göring was daily awaiting news that an amnesty for political prisoners and exiles would be decreed and Hitler's release gave him further encouragement to sustain himself in this hope. With the financial help of friends and relations the Görings set out from Italy for Sweden, travelling via Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland and Danzig. The homecoming to the little family circle in Stockholm was an event which can be understood only by those who have experienced exile, either voluntary or forced, from their own people for

long years under difficult conditions. Poverty-stricken, in bad health, and with no hope for the future, the Görings at least were among those to whom they were bound by the strongest ties and who understood them. Carin Göring was dying. She knew that life held very little for her, but she carried on uncomplainingly. Hermann Göring, continually listening for that one word 'amnesty,' decided to settle down in Stockholm and to obtain some sort of temporary employment which would at least keep the wolf from the door, until he could return to Germany and resume his work there. Full of expectations, and buoyed up by his unfailing optimism, he took a small flat and managed to furnish it with some of his furniture, sent over from Germany piece by piece so as not to attract undue attention. He first tried to obtain work in the air service, but there were no vacancies. The little money left from their friends' contributions had to be shepherded. One egg had to serve the purpose of a dozen. Luxuries in the little household were unknown.

At this time Sweden was experiencing a phase of great industrial depression, and unemployment was rife. To add further to its economical difficulties the country was flooded by streams of refugees from Russia and the eastern Baltic States. From morning till night Göring tramped the streets of Stockholm in search of any kind of work which would provide sufficient money to buy even the necessities of life. Time and again the larder was empty. Little family heirlooms, knick-knacks of jewellery and clothing, from week to week, found their way to the local pawnshops.

Carin Göring's relations could understand everything about their daughter's husband except his blind striving after Hitler's cause and his ambition to be actively concerned in German politics. This they could not understand. In common with all other thinking people at that time, they considered that while National Socialism, in

principle, was doubtless very excellent and suited to Germany, the time was not yet ripe for a Nazi revolution through which the party could rise to power. The Swedish people admired Göring and his young wife for their faith in Hitler and his movement, but they could not understand it. High motives, they thought, did not fill empty stomachs nor pay rent.

It was impossible for Göring to tell the von Focks everything about his private financial affairs, and the pride of both his wife and himself would not allow of too great a discussion. They starved in dignity. Doubtless his mother-in-law, with womanly instinct, felt much that was not spoken; doubtless she helped in ways not too obvious, but nothing could prevent sorrow, poverty, and illness stalking through the little home of the wanderers.

Gradually the home itself began to break up; stick by stick the furniture went to second-hand dealers to replenish the cupboard and to pay doctors' bills. Through all this upheaval the wife clung tenaciously to life, though on many days her heart was so bad that she lay for hours unconscious. Poverty and its accompaniment, malnutrition, affected the health of both, and Göring's wounds again became open and troublesome.

For twenty months Hermann Göring remained in Sweden, under physical and mental conditions which would have completely ruined the health of most men, but human nature is such that it seems to thrive best on adversity.

Then, in the autumn of 1926, came the long-awaited message. He was amnestied and was at liberty to move about freely in his own country. Hasty preparations were made to return to Munich, but at the last moment Carin Göring collapsed completely and had to be admitted into hospital, in which she had to remain for some months. Göring had to return to Germany alone. This was the first parting of this unfortunate couple, but the

husband was fired by the resolve, now that his political ideas could again find expression, to cast aside the past and build anew the home from which they had both fled in 1923—only thirty-four months ago, but which represented in suffering a lifetime.

With his wife lying at death's door in a distant land, Hermann Göring entered upon another phase in his life. The real fight began after he had hastened to Munich and placed his services unreservedly at the disposal of Adolf Hitler.

Now Hitler, being a south German, had never liked or trusted the Prussians, although he admired their military ability. During 1925 he had found the amalgamation arranged by Gregor Strasser to be getting beyond his control, so he broke away, with his faction, from the *Deutschvölkische Freiheitsbewegung*, and the National Socialist Workers party of Germany again made its appearance, this time not only in the south, but in proud Berlin.

Until the amnesty the acknowledged leader of Nazism in the north was Dr. Josef Goebbels, a brilliant young journalist who was editing *Der Angriff* (The Attack), a newspaper devoted to National Socialist politics. He commenced to publish this paper from a cellar-like office which he has himself termed the 'Opium Den,' because it lacked natural light and ventilation. Goebbels became the pamphleteer and propagandist-in-chief to the Nazi party, and his vitriolic tongue and pen made him particularly obnoxious to the Government of the Reich and the authorities in Berlin. His attacks on the party system in Germany have been not unmingled with a certain amount of sardonic humour.

Hermann Göring went from Munich to Berlin within a few weeks of his arrival in Germany, and from 1926

onward began a collaboration, not always too amicable, with Goebbels, which forced National Socialism into the imagination of the dour Prussians.

Here, in Berlin, Göring again took up the threads of friendship with his old comrade of the war years, Bruno Loerzer. A small circle of men of this type sprang up and schemes began to be born which brought about a widening of possibilities to the new party in Northern Germany. The lives of this circle, of which Göring was the acknowledged head, were very simple, for the main reason that they could not be otherwise. An empty cash-box will always enforce simplicity.

Through force of circumstances the National Socialist party had to relinquish open revolutionary methods, and, if its existence was indeed to be continued, tactics of parliamentary legality had to be assumed, at least, if not too scrupulously practised. So the battle of the hustings began. But this renouncing of revolutionary methods did not mean that Hitler and Göring had given up working for a German revolution, in which, as Göring was wont to say: 'We want to make workers, peasants, shopkeepers and members of the learned professions, members of all classes, professions, and Churches, first and foremost, Germans again.' This was Göring's theme at every meeting. The people must be 'Germans' and their duty was 'Germany.' The torch of Nazism was carried into the heart of Prussia and unbounded enthusiasm began to show itself for this new creed. From every platform Nazi speakers told their hearers that their policy was to destroy democracy, to abolish all form of parliamentary government and to establish a dictatorship. To all these promises or threats the people cried 'Hurrah,' and hastily rushed to join the party and to pay their membership fees. Strange as it may seem, the bulk of the population revelled in the idea of a dictator's regime, for by now they had become a little suspicious of the

Reichstag Social Democrats. What really passed through the minds of the vast majority was that if all that Hitler promised could be brought about, then enslavement to his movement would be such 'sweet punishment.'

With these clarion promises by Hitler's men to declare a dictatorship, if returned by a majority to power, the Government began to consider also the imposition of similar methods; if the people agreed to it, on the one hand, the powers that be thought, why cannot we forestall the Nazis and suspend the Constitution. This idea was toyed with for several years, and the Government's hesitation proved its self-avowed weakness and led, in later years, to all the excesses of which Germany then complained. It hesitated and it was lost. As events will show, the scholarly Brüning asserted himself too late.

On a certain Sunday in April 1925, while Hermann Göring was still under the ban of the Reich and in exile, a turn in the events of German domestic history took place which had far-reaching effects, and the incident, as then thought little of in relation to Nazi politics, proved the key by which the Hitler movement was to open the door to the Third Reich. Field-Marshal Paul von Hindenburg was elected President of the German Republic by a small majority of votes. The supporters of the Weimar Constitution were dumbfounded. This installation of the late Generalissimo of the German Armed Forces shocked world opinion and was a portent, to those who can read the signs, of things to come. He claimed that he had come forward out of a regard to his duty to his country. He said that he 'was not a party man' and as the President 'was above politics.' Nevertheless, the world became disturbed and the ex-enemy countries saw in his presence the beginning of a war of revenge. It meant the revision of the Treaty, just when the Ebert regime was endeavouring to pursue, under grave difficulties, a policy of fulfilment. *The Morning Post*

referred to him as 'the embodiment of the German Empire . . . the gravest event in world politics since the Bolshevik revolution in Russia,' and concluded by demanding instantly a Franco-Belgian-British alliance against Germany. Certain democratic circles in Germany were also as scared as the foreign Press, but Time marched on and the aged Field-Marshal appeared to settle down and pursue the duties of a figurehead of State. But his presence at the head of the German State was the signal for the rallying of all Nationalist sympathies in the Reich against the 'System.' Hindenburg had played the role of soldier-adviser to His Imperial Majesty for long and arduous years; now, unbeknown to himself (and he would have strenuously denied it), he had undertaken the role of a twentieth-century John the Baptist who had come to prepare the way.

In the conduct of the complicated lives of nations history shows that it is not intention that forms a future policy: it is what succeeding statesmen can make out of a situation created by a predecessor.

The Nationalist movements in Germany looked to Hindenburg to denounce the Republic and declare himself a regent of the Monarchy, but he would have none of it. What justification is there, then, for asserting that Hindenburg was the key to Nazi success? Just this! That Hindenburg was an army man and therefore understood the ways of soldiers. Many brilliant war leaders had been attracted to Hitler's banner. He was also a Junker, and men like the Duke of Coburg, the ex-Crown Prince, several princes of Prussia, General von Epp, Duke Ludwig of Bavaria, Prince Guido Henckel-Donnersmarck of Rottach, and many ex-embassadors, had either actively joined up with the Nazis or had backed them heavily with finance. Hindenburg was a lover of Germany and had served it, boy and man, in its most brilliant years. Hitler had promised to rebuild Germany into the Third

Empire. What more reasonable thing to suppose than that the Field-Marshal would naturally have a soft spot for any movement, led by any German, which promised to rebuild the glories of his country.

Therefore it will be readily seen that the stage was set better under Hindenburg's regime for a movement, having in its title 'Nationalist' as well as 'Socialist,' to expand. Going was easier than in 1923, but it was not easy.

Although Göring was working day and night for the party, there was as yet little money about. Contributions and donations from wealthy supporters were used to provide area offices and for the alleviation of distress among the rank and file. So he had again to start looking for work. The German commercial air service, to which he naturally turned, could give him no employment. Daily the search for work went on and personal hardships again began to be experienced. Finally he managed to get a job as a commercial traveller and from his earnings, little though they were, he was able to send money to his wife, who was still in hospital in Sweden. His endeavours to get a better job were always, in 1927, frustrated by the fact of his open association with Hitler, because employers (who were not yet in the mood to see the benefits that they later thought would come through National Socialism) would have none of a man who subscribed to such heretical doctrines as the abolition of interest, the control of profits, and the nationalization of money, all planks in the Nazi platform.

In the spring of 1927 Göring was at last able to bring his wife to Berlin. Together they lived in a furnished room and had meals in cheap restaurants.¹

¹ The writer knows personally such a restaurant where the waiters boast proudly of having served Hermann Göring, his wife, and a friend, Körner (now Secretary of State in one of Göring's ministries), with one huge tureen of split-pea soup containing pigs' ears (Erbsensuppe mit Schweineohren), total cost fifty pfennige, sixpence at parity of exchange.

Many times when money was scarce they and their friends pooled resources and shared one dish between them.

The whole of 1927 was another of Göring's hand-to-mouth periods, and enthusiasm provided circulation when calories gave out. The other parties in the German political system began to show their annoyance at Hitler's intrusion into the Reich. They were also aware that for some long months he had been negotiating with the League of German Industries, with the Rhenish and Westphalian industrialists. If these negotiations succeeded, then his movement would be adequately financed and capable of putting up candidates in large numbers for the coming Reichstag elections.

About this time saw the politics in Germany divided into three almost watertight compartments: the Left, Centre, and Right. The Left, as its name implies, was the rallying ground of all with what we in England would call Labour views plus the actual Communist party, the Centre was composed in the main of various Catholic parties having Liberal tendencies, and the Right embraced the Nationalists and Nazis.

Communism had become a nightmare to heavy industry, and even the mild Socialism of the bespectacled Heinrich Brüning became suspect. The capitalists and workmen crossed swords and strikes spread throughout the Reich. Labour wanted action and left the organizations of democracy for the extreme Left parties and for the Nazis.

It was the cleavage in the mass of the electorate that gave National Socialism its opportunity to recruit millions of new members. While being Nationalist it was Socialist, and its speakers appeared to have found the answer to the German workman's trouble, the German landowners' woes, the professional man's heavy taxation and the industrialist's declining profits—the Jews, Reparations, the Marxists and the bonds of the Treaty of Versailles.

Never before in political history has any one party been able, by its catholicism of programme, to attract such a variety of humanity to its fold.

As the intensity of the political struggle, from 1928 onwards, increased, the various parties, without exception, built up the now-famous protection corps, all of which took to themselves a badge and uniform. Soon Germany was to present the startling appearance of a battle-field, with huge private armies marching through cities, towns, and villages. These armies all had their own particular marching songs.

Limited at first to keeping order at meetings, the activities of these private armies grew to such a magnitude that, Communist or Nazi, it mattered little which, they would seize upon any excuse for a street brawl, ending in broken heads, arms or legs. Hatred, to a degree unthought of in the twentieth century, sprang up between these forces, and it was a hatred many times satisfied in blood.

While the National Socialist movement, through its leader, Adolf Hitler, was committed to a policy of obtaining power by legal methods, the very illegal methods of the other parties forced it into a position of using the S.A. The police remained, as far as was reasonably possible, aloof and apart from these conflicts, and the contestants were allowed to gather up their respective casualties and disappear.

As the unemployed grew in number so did the strength of the S.A. increase, for in the organization young men found much to occupy their time.

Throughout the Reich the organization was divided into sections based on military principles. Each section was complete in itself, many sections being added together to make what, in military terms, would be a division. Physical culture and camping were matters of routine; rifle clubs sprang up within the organization—in fact, through the years a pretty respectable army was organ-

ized, lacking only the requisite equipment, which, in any case, could be found in every Reichswehr depot. Another factor that endeared the Nazi movement to the majority of the German people was its ever-readiness to work in any emergency—for if, from an outsider's point of view, it had its doubtful motives, it also had its good qualities. A coal-mine disaster, the derailing of a railway train, forest fires and winter floods—all found first in the work of rescue a detachment of the Sturm Abteilungen.

The Nazi party had made itself indispensable in German life long before Adolf Hitler moved into the Wilhelmstrasse in 1933. The organizing power behind all this was Göring. During 1928 he organized the whole of Germany into the sections and appointed his own section leaders. He built around him a kind of general staff, men upon whom he could rely implicitly. He had long before made up his mind that a policy of unrelenting ruthlessness was necessary to purge Germany of those elements to which he took exception and which stood in the path of his party's plan for a new Germany—a Germany which would be free from paying tribute and which would follow 'einem neuen radikalen Aufbau.'

In the spring of 1928 the Nazi party had its election campaign all set and in order. Hermann Göring was nominated for the Potsdam division of Brandenburg. With his war record a better constituency could not have been chosen, for, quite apart from the military in garrison there, the villas and small estates surrounding the town were in the occupation of retired military folk. His personality and decorations made up for any individual distaste many may have had for the young party.

In May the Reichstag elections were in full swing throughout Germany. The appeals of the candidates had, as running commentary, the revolver-shots of the opposing parties. When the newspapers recorded the results from the various constituencies as they came to

hand they had also to print in the same edition the casualty lists. German shot German for no other reason than that they wore different coloured shirts.

The National Socialist party won twelve seats in the Reichstag, Göring being seventh man in for Potsdam. On 13 June the newly elected Reichstag assembled, little knowing that among its new Nazi members was a man who was shortly to become its President and who was also to use its democratic machinery to fool a Chancellor of the Reich.

The number of Göring's seat in the Reichstag was 547, and he found himself sitting next to General von Epp from Bavaria. The Nazi party were bottled up in a corner of the chamber and it was from here that Göring's denunciation of the Dawes Loan was thundered. About this time the ex-Crown Prince fluttered into the flame of the Nazi candle, and he was followed by Prince August Wilhelm (Auwi) and Prince Eitel Friedrich, two of his younger brothers. This began to make people rub their eyes and look a second time. What was afoot? Was the Hohenzollern uncomfortable in Doorn? The ex-Crown Prince was not to know, when he wrote Hermann Göring a letter of congratulation upon his election to the Reichstag, that within a year or two of its dispatch the recipient would be the most powerful man in Prussia.

Apart from his political activities, Göring had by now achieved recognition in other walks of life. During July he went to Bern and Zurich, to carry out tests on the Toernblad parachute at the request of the Swiss Air Service. While there he also addressed several meetings of German sympathizers who wanted to learn all about National Socialism and its implications.

Now a member of the Reichstag, and his party becoming more popular every day, Göring's financial position became more certain. His job as a commercial traveller had been given up some while ago and he was

able to live on his parliamentary salary. ' In the late summer they were able to move into a home of their own in Schöneberg, a south-western suburb of Berlin. Rapidly this home came to take the place of the villa in Obermenzing and a circle sprang up presided over by Carin Göring, weak though she was. It became the meeting-place of the Nazi party, and it was here that leaders of the other parties came who wanted to discuss affairs with Hitler, for as yet he had no central place in Berlin—the N.S.D.A.P. was still directed from Munich.

This warm-hearted woman was a diplomatist of rare ability. When words rose high and an open break between either Hitler or her husband and the visitors from the opposition seemed inevitable she would step into the breach with a soft word and cups of good coffee. These social duties bore heavily upon her and the long tours of her husband into distant parts of the Reich, lasting ten days or more, gave her sufficient freedom from these duties to afford herself well-earned rests.

By now the Nazi movement had become firmly rooted among the student class, and the old walls of the universities resounded to the cries of 'Heil Hitler.' Hermann Göring was utilized to the full to speak at this type of meeting for obvious reasons, for the young are attracted by the romantic in life. Men who have done things are infinitely preferable to the mustiness of the lecture-room.

The Hohenzollern princes were always taking visitors to the Görings' household for political conversion. Aristocrats of the old Germany wanted to know more about this strange man, Hitler, and what he represented. They thought that he could not be so bad as people said, if a man of Göring's upbringing and military associations called him friend and worked the hardest in his cause. Again, about the Nazi policy, what was it? The questions these people asked were always the same, and they sought always for the same faults in the programme. In

a few months it appeared as if all the families had walked out of the *Almanach de Gotha* right into the Görings' home. And many of them walked on into the Nazi movement, giving it a lustre that was its guarantee of respectability to those financial magnates who were attracted to it, as to an insurance policy, in 1929-32.

The Nazi contingent in the Reichstag attracted very little attention during the first six months' session, but on 22 February 1929 a full-dress debate on the condition of the German National Railways (*Reichsbahn*) took place, which brought them into the limelight, for a pet subject, one of their greatest grievances, was about to be brought into the discussion—the Dawes Loan.

It was alleged that due to the heavy interest claimed by the Dawes Agreement, and the consequently high contribution to the pool which the earnings of the railway had to provide, the safety margin of the railway was in jeopardy, rolling stock could not be renewed, the track could not be adequately maintained, the personnel was being discharged in large numbers, and generally the reputation of the system was at a low level. All this was attributed to the pressure of the international bondholders, who insisted upon levying such high interest rates for the use of the loans.

Spokesmen of the different parties took the floor and went round and round the subject. They had no wish to affront the people who had been good enough to advance the nation the money, but they wanted somehow to justify themselves to their fellow-deputies in the chamber. When the representatives of the stronger parties had made contribution to the debate Göring wound up the discussion in his usual arbitrary manner: "The cause of all these unbearable conditions is only, and alone, the exploitation of the German railways through the Dawes

Plan and Reparations. All parties must admit this to-day, but all parties must also admit that they bear a part of the blame for allowing the situation to go so far. This is the kernel of the position. The railway, at one time the pride of the German Empire and maybe the best in the world, servant to the people alone and to their economy, is, to-day, purely an object of exploitation and utilization by our enemies. My party has foretold from the beginning how these things would end. If we come to power we will give to the free German people the free German railway."¹

This speech confirmed Göring in his right as leader of the Nazis in the Reichstag. It led the Left and the Centre parties to expect real trouble because the creditor States were just then calling for another meeting to discuss ways and means and to settle finally the exasperating question of reparations. With the Nazis, as shown by Göring, ready to hurl their defiance in the teeth of the ex-enemies, the Reich Government was afraid to commit itself. The Socialist Chancellor, Müller, approved of the Young Plan, and the Cabinet, supported by Hindenburg's presidential sanction, announced its intention of signing. Then and there a pandemonium arose, led by Hindenburg's friends, and supported by Hitler's Nazis and Seldte's 'Stahlhelm' league of old soldiers, of which the Field-Marshal was himself an honorary patron or vice-president. Traitor! was shouted at everyone in favour of the plan; a popular clamour arose from among the President's own clique for his resignation if he dared to arouse their wrath still further by signing and thus committing the German people to another 'slave treaty.' The President was at his wits' end, the Socialists were in confusion, and the Right saw, too late, that world

¹ On 30 January 1937 Adolf Hitler repudiated the right of foreign control over the German Federal railways and withdrew its income as a first charge to the Dawes bond-holders.

opinion would this time be really shocked if a persistence of their attitude resulted in sacrificing the venerable Field-Marshal to their truculent Nationalism. By a series of manœuvres, Gustav Stresemann, Foreign Secretary, and protagonist of a policy of fulfilment of the Treaty wherever possible and a believer in the use of personal influence to exact concessions from the victor Powers, succeeded in extracting a promise that the Rhine would be given over to the control of the Reich, if the Germans now signed the Young Agreement in which was a promise to pay 122 milliards over a period of sixty years.¹

This promise was readily given, because the freedom of the Rhine appealed to every German. The Young Plan no longer looked like a 'slave treaty' except to the Nazis, who hammered away, pointing continually to it and to its signatories, in terms of the greatest opprobrium.

The economic distress in Germany and the era of misunderstanding of her own politicians by the electorate, which had been ushered in about this time, gave Göring every opportunity to rally to him more and more of the working classes, and the tactics of the opposition to Nazism yielded to him a wonderful harvest which it had itself sown. Through the Centre party (and therefore by implication the Catholic clergy) allying itself with the Social Democrats and Communists in the Reichstag and in the country, to oppose without reason, to oppose just because by doing so a showy attempt was being made at obstructing the Hitler movement, they were all laid open to Göring's vitriolic invective. 'Look at them,' he would cry, 'the God-denying Reds running to ground with the black rats (of the Centre).'

When told that the future must belong to National

¹ This fantastic amount of money has never yet been paid; the agreement providing for its payment has gone the way of all similar documents.

Socialism because youth was on its side, he replied : " No, youth comes to us because the future is with us."

In every corner of Germany banners were hung from houses, notices pasted on walls, hoardings and empty shop windows, each one bearing the same notice : ' Germany awake ! Decide now. Either with the System against National Socialism or with the N.S.D.A.P. for a new Germany.'

In print, and on the tongues of speakers, this same call, ' Germany awake,' was broadcast, until one began to wonder if Germany was being managed from the Wilhelmstrasse or from the Brown House in Munich. This call to an awakening was not the appeal of a political party ; it sprang out at one in a peremptory command. Just Awake !

The aeroplane now began to appear as a means of transport for the leaders of the National Socialists. By this method widespread areas could be covered in one day ; many meetings were held through this innovation which otherwise would have been neglected. During the summer of 1929 Hermann Göring covered the whole of the Reich, from Cologne to Königsberg, from Stettin to Stuttgart. He was still hailed by the waiting multitudes as the last commander of the Richthofen squadron. On many of these trips he was accompanied by Prince August Wilhelm, who usually spoke in support, thus giving, as it were, a monarchical blessing to the Hitler movement. Meetings varied from attendances of 4000 to 40,000, all of whom paid for admittance. Quite a heavy percentage of people at these meetings were not members of the Nazi party and, week by week, the inclusion of the converted from these meetings into the membership lists caused the total strength to swell to staggering figures, as the 1930 elections will disclose.

It will be well to pause a moment here to inspect

several reasons, other than the purely emotional one, which brought about this accretion of strength in Hitler's movement.

During the period under discussion industrial conditions had become worse than they had been for many years. The National Exchequer was so depleted that a cut of 20 per cent on all civil servants' salaries had been made ; and thus, given the lead, business houses followed by imposing similar cuts, often greater, on the salaries or wages of their employees.

In pursuing a policy of paying debts with borrowed money the Reichs Government had brought Germany almost to a standstill. The internal strife of all the parties was no recommendation to foreign lenders to pour yet more money into the coffers of a State so negligently managed. By increasing taxation and retrenchment in public expenditure, at the expense even of the social services, the Budget had, it is true, been balanced, but a legacy from this belated state of equilibrium was handed on into the next year—1930.

Accompanying the lower standard of living arising, quite naturally, out of the foregoing, came far-reaching social repercussions which in the end tended to convert the economic crisis into a political one. Every class suffered. The nation as a whole had tried the politics of all the parties except those of the Nazis—therefore, many turned to this young movement for a way out of the chaos of Social Democracy. Twenty-five per cent of the total trade union membership was wholly unemployed and a further 16 per cent was working on short time. Transitional benefit (*Krisen Fürsorge*) rose to tremendous totals in money and number of recipients, until this had to be ruthlessly scaled down. In despair, many, having exhausted their unemployment, transitional benefit, and poor relief (*Wohlfart*), discontinued registering at the labour exchanges, and these, together with all unemployed

over sixty years of age,¹ were never again recorded in the official unemployment figures.

These conditions of the working classes in Germany then reasonably account for so many manual workers, whose natural place would seem to be among the Socialists and Communists, in the N.S.D.A.P. As yet no attempt, beyond the usual mention of the activities of Hitler and the psychological basis of the movement's mass appeal, had been made to explain the presence of the middle-class membership.

It must be borne in mind that German National Socialism had a political-social-economic genesis and it retained these three phases during its development. What explains the enormous number of middle-class people in its ranks?

The inflation of 1923 destroyed the economic basis of the middle classes, and through their loss of savings, accompanied by insecurity of employment and the lowering of their standards of living, they had, in 1930, to a large extent become gradually proletarianized. Until National Socialism had developed to the stage in which it now had orthodox representation in the Reichstag, the huge mass had, for want of another party more suited to their middle-class tastes, supported either the Democratic or purely National parties. By its varied programme the N.S.D.A.P. appeared to fill the gap in Germany's already too numerous class-sets. Finally, as the Nazis inveighed most forcibly against the effects of the inflation and burdens of the war, the middle classes accepted its doctrines as a duck takes to water.

In the summer of 1930 Hermann Göring had again domestic worries. His wife's health broke down com-

¹ In Germany at this time all workers over sixty years of age were considered incapable of work and were thus excluded from all statistics.

pletely and she was admitted to a sanatorium in Kreuth, in Bavaria, where she had to remain for some weeks. A complication of heart and lung trouble had set in and she had to lay for hours on an open balcony in the mountain summer sun. During these weeks Thomas von Kantzow, Carin Göring's boy by her first husband, was staying with Göring, and he was cared for with a fatherly attention which his greatest friends stood amazed at. The presence of this child softened the ruthless hunter of Jews and Marxists to a lamb-like peacefulness. The transformation was a source of great wonderment to all who knew him. At week-ends, man and boy, they would both go to the mountains and visit the woman who meant so much to both of them. She was made doubly happy by seeing them both so happy and healthy together, although she knew that for her such glowing health would always be denied.

The Reichstag elections of September 1930 again saw Göring back in the new House for Potsdam. The result of the poll yielded 107 seats for the Nazis, and they began to be looked upon as a powerful factor in German politics. The foreign newspaper editors who had growled at the spate of cables pouring into their offices in November 1923 began to telegraph to their correspondents in Berlin for some real news. The Americans particularly requested reassurances as to the safety of the Dollar stake in the Reich.

Hitler, because he was not yet a German citizen, had no seat in the Reichstag and occupied his time by leading the party in the constituencies, directing the whole activities from Munich.

The Nazi representation in Parliament had now become so strong that it required a leader. Goebbels was too busily engaged directing his newspaper and the propaganda department of the party; Göring was a fighter, and a fighter was needed to lead. So he was

appointed the political deputy or commissioner (*Politischer Beauftragter*) of Adolf Hitler. This placed Göring right in the front rank of politicians, as, by the nature of his new post in the movement, he was vested with autonomous power in the Reichstag. He was empowered to pledge the party and its head in matters of policy and to attack or defend resolutions without terms of reference. This placed him at an advantage over the other parties, who, in time of difficulty, had to go into committee to deliberate upon the best attitude to be adopted in regard to particular problems, which, from time to time, arose.

The pursuance of this policy by the Nazis was sufficient indication to the world that all forms of democratic government in Germany was doomed. Already Brüning was the instrument of a præsidial Cabinet—a virtual dictatorship controlled by Hindenburg's right of veto—and now the most aggressive party in the Reichstag was pursuing a similar course: conflict was bound to arise between the dominant Nazi leader and the ascetic, though equally dominant, Brüning. With a membership representing 20 per cent of the Reichstag seats, the Nazi party now began to make itself felt. True, it tabled ridiculous measures which, in its heart of hearts, it must have known to be impossible of execution, if passed; but it was always goading the united opposition to a change of policy which, however, never came about.

Words ran high and ink-pots often flew across the floor of the Chamber to act as emphasis or full stop to some particularly knotty problem. Whenever Göring rose to speak, the Chamber waited for his Jovian bolts to be flung into the midst of the opposition—the Jews and the Marxists, as the Nazi nomenclature described them. Although the Nazis were hated by their political opponents, the political conscience of the groups in the 'System' had become so minute as to consider, from time to time, a liaison with the one to overthrow the

other, and leader after leader of the other fifty-odd parties came to Göring with a suggestion for this or for that; usually just a scheme to achieve some personal advancement to the person making the suggestion.

National Socialism was spreading like a flame throughout the Reich. Crushing taxation bore heavily upon the backs of all, workmen or capitalist, and soon both sides began to rise in anger at the Social Democratic parties. Their pent-up hatred was levelled at the Chancellor. 'Hunger Chancellor,' 'Jesuit,' 'Servant of the Jews,' rolled off the tongues of one set, usually led by the Nazis, while Brüning's friends and followers referred to him as the greatest Chancellor since Bismarck. 'German, five days out of every six you are working for the enemy,' was the slogan slung at the people by the Nazis just to rub in the terrific height to which taxation had risen.

The Wall Street crash was reflected in Germany by a slowing down of the wheels of industry in the Ruhr—the *Amerikanische Wirtschaftswunder*, which had risen like a Golem in the minds of the Germans between 1924 till now, was shown to be a thing having feet of clay.

Nazis and Communists hurled insults and threats at each other and offered the new Jerusalem to the masses. Nazi propaganda, carried on with such virility, was beginning to have its effect. The State and Municipal elections showed clearly that Hitler was winning. The free Hanseatic State of Bremen fell before the attack of the Swastika; Hesse, once the home of Liberalism, returned a Nazi majority, as did Anhalt, Baden, Brunswick, Oldenburg and Schaumburg-Lippe. With such a large representation in the Parliaments of the nation, many National Socialists were all for a revolutionary action of the real kind; machine-guns on the Brandenburg Gate, and so on, with the Swastika flag flying over the Castle, the Chancellery, and the Reichstag. But the

leaders knew that 'legality' counted. They also knew that they had stupefied Alfred Hugenberg into an alliance with them—Hugenberg, then the greatest newspaper proprietor and film magnate in Germany. He was also the head of the German National party, Conservatives to the last man. Soon the cinema screens throughout Germany threw back to audiences pictures of marching men, of Nazi soup kitchens distributing food to the workless in town and village. Pictures of camp life, with its healthy accompaniments of singing and accordion-playing, began to enthuse the multitudes.

The Berlin *Lokal Anzeiger* carried columns of editorials propounding views similar to those which could be found on the main pages of the *Völkische Beobachter* and *Angriff*, both Hitlerian papers. Shortly afterwards two thousand other German newspapers ran pro-Nazi editorials, and the *Telegraphen Union* and *Wipro* Press agencies sent discreet parcels of syndicated matter to the smaller provincial papers in East Prussia and the other agricultural districts of the Reich.

The alliance between the Nazis and Hugenberg's Nationalists had been consummated before even the betrothal ceremony. Hugenberg, woman-like, had conceded favours to hold the wayward mate; he had conceived a plan to use the Hitler movement as a tool in his hands, as the agent of the German capitalists—he would use, and then discard. But he had judged without counting upon Göring and Goebbels—Göring the activist—and Goebbels of the poison pen—as the events of 1933 will disclose.

.

'The Nazi storm troops are Germany's spearhead against Jewish Marxism and capitalism. With the selfless work of these troops the cause of National Socialism is assured,' Hitler had said, but in the late summer of

1930, when the strength of this private army was about 80,000 active members, the behaviour of the Berlin divisions shocked Hitler, its founder, and Göring, its organizer. Open revolt ran through the ranks and developed into an incident fraught with disaster for the movement. Now in the Nazi party there has always been a section which believed in the purely socialistic side of the programme—the Left of the Right, so to say. This section expressed its gravest dissatisfaction with conditions, and a manifesto was drawn up which definitely stated a number of grievances, included among them being a disgruntlement at more of the rank and file not being put up as candidates at the Reichstag elections (here was a plea for equality, a condition which they had been led to believe existed), a dissatisfaction with the low pay the ordinary members of the Sturm Abteilungen were receiving, and a complaint that while they were continually marching, the leaders were driving about in expensive motor cars. No notice was at first taken of their grievances, whereupon the ‘rebels’ set about wrecking the furniture and fittings of the Berlin Headquarters, and going out into the nearest *Lokal*, or pub, got thoroughly drunk. ‘A large number of our party members are factory owners and financiers, who arrive at our meetings in large cars. They look to us to protect their money-bags, but they are mistaken,’ the ‘rebels’ declared. ‘We workers of the fist and of the head will not be cheated out of our socialistic birthright which, for Dr. Goebbels, is a means and not the end. Our liberation from domestic as well as foreign capital is our aim.’ Hitler journeyed from Munich to Berlin and pleaded with the men, who would have none of it, and went out and smashed a motor car which they thought was his. To prevent the revolt spreading Hitler gave in and pay was increased and more rapid promotion arranged. But it cost them thirty Pfennigs a month higher subscription.

Hitler yielded, but Göring hardened. He knew how to deal with mutinies. He would forestall any further 'palace' revolutions. He increased the strength and the power of the *Schutz Staffeln* (S.S.), a body of picked legions which had sprung up, superimposed upon the main body of the Sturm Abteilungen. The main function of this body of 'protection squadrons' was to act as an intelligence corps within the Nazi movement. They wore a silver skull and crossbones as a cap badge, and their uniform was black. In every way they became to be really superior to the S.A. men and ultimately became to be looked upon as a kind of twentieth-century Prætorian Guard for Hitler, Göring, and Goebbels.

From now on relations between the politically-minded section of the Reichswehr and Göring's faction in the National Socialist party took a new turn. The two elements began to knit closer together, though popular opinion was that they were at daggers drawn. The professional pride of the small, but efficient, German Republican army warmed towards this party which, if in power, offered better days for them as soldiers. It meant the recognition of the old military caste again. This did not mean, however, that the soldiers would tolerate any encroachment on their preserves, neither did it imply that the Reichswehr would be party to a seizure of power by force—quite the opposite. The army wanted only to see a more self-respecting Germany, and the Nazis (now that the Nationalists had allied with them) appeared to be the party which stood for such a state of affairs. Other factors began to bear upon Göring's service to the party. More and more distinguished visitors called at the flat in Badenschestrasse; the fighter was attracting the kings of German finance and industry, of banking and commerce. Fritz Thyssen, coal and steel 'Baron,' still smarting under his arrest and imprisonment by the French in their Ruhr adventure, Krüger of the

Potash Syndicate, and Hjalmar Schacht, Reichsbank president, all came to discuss with him the parlous position of Germany and the relation of the Nazi party to the future.

.

Unremittingly he carried the policy of Nazism through the provinces, to the universities, and into the huge stadiums in Berlin. His powerful voice was heard by millions, month by month, and the Reichstag rocked to his vituperation. By ridicule, by satire, and by every device known to debate, he made the members writhe in their seats, and the next day saw him attacked in the newspapers of the Left, the Nazi newspapers suitably replying.

On 16 June 1931 Chancellor Brüning invited Göring, in his capacity of Political Commissioner of Hitler and the N.S.D.A.P., to a conference in the Chancellery. The German Chancellor was supported by his War Minister, General Wilhelm Groener, and Dr. Hans Luther, president of the Reichsbank. Heinrich Brüning was very outspoken. He complained of the conduct of the Nazis in the country and in the Reichstag. He implied that foreign opinion was being swayed against the Government of the Reich, through the reports that the foreign correspondents were sending back to their newspapers. The conduct of affairs in the Reichstag was equally as fully reported in English and American newspapers. Brüning, supported by his Ministers, called upon Göring to cease his persistent attacks upon the Government and to work with the Government. He asked him to agree to a suspension of the powers of the Reichstag, while the Cabinet ruled through the presidential emergency decree which he, as Chancellor, had a right to ask Hindenburg to give. Without this agreement between Göring and the Government things would go

from bad to worse, and the ultimate effect on Germany's foreign exchange position would be catastrophic.

To all this Göring replied with blunt words. The fault of which the Chancellor complained should be looked for in the record of his own Government following the policy of Jewish Marxism. The last ten years of Social Democratic rule had brought the country to its present pass and no emergency decree could forestall the crash which was bound to come. He, Brüning, could give no guarantee of recovery under his policy; only the fullest operation of the policy laid down by National Socialism could save Germany. If Germany was to be saved, then Brüning must hand over the control of the State to Hitler and his party. National Socialism, and National Socialism only, was the guarantee that the conditions of the people would not be worsened. Brüning's scheme to dissolve the Reichstag was just another trick to prevent the National Socialist voice from being heard in the Reichstag. No, Göring told the Chancellor, while the Nazis would have worked with him some while ago, his policy of the last few months, of already ruling in semi-dictatorship style, killed completely any idea of a coalition.

When challenged at meetings and in the Press on his unrelenting attitude to Brüning, he replied that power must meet power. He contended that power politics of all the victor nations was imposing its will on the German people, compelling it to make 'tribute' payments, and only by a rearmed Germany would this power be broken. To break this power was the unswerving policy of the National Socialist movement, to which he was unreservedly committed.

For some while the wearing of uniforms by the Nazis had been forbidden in Prussia, but in many states around the brown shirt was still in evidence. Whenever the Sturm Abteilungen were required to concentrate, the

Prussian divisions used usually to take train and lorry to Brunswick and parade there with freedom.

The Government of Brunswick was a coalition one, composed of Nazis and a combination of Left parties. Friction was everlastingly occurring between them, and in desperation, one of the Nazi deputies broke away from the party and the Government. Fresh from the quelling of a second S.A. revolt in Berlin, Hermann Göring rushed out to Brunswick through the night and, in his own inimitable fashion, purged the party and restored order, in this oasis of National Socialism in a Left Reich.

To many of the rank and file, progress of the party's ideas was not going at a sufficiently satisfactory pace, and heedless of the authority of their leaders they rose up in open rebellion. Many broke away from the party, either to sulk or to join the Communists. Göring's hands were full, and as if there was not trouble enough, his own domestic affairs again became troublesome. His wife had completely broken down, her heart was beyond its work and she lay unconscious for many hours. The doctors worked hard to restore her, gave her injections, and applied every method known to modern medical science. At last her pulse returned, but both she and Göring knew that it could now be only a question of months before she passed completely from this earthly plane. Shortly after his stormy session with Brüning he took Carin Göring to Altheide, Silesia, a spa famous for its remarkable curative powers for heart disease. After a month or two here Carin Göring went to Groeditzberg, and in August her husband joined her with a small party of relatives and friends from the Nazi party. For several weeks Göring cast aside the strife and care of political office and tended his dying wife. They went into Austria and stayed awhile with his sisters, attending at the christening of a daughter of one Paula Huber.

These few weeks in the mountains with his wife, who so sadly needed care and affection, made of Göring a different man. Chameleon-like he had changed from the ruthless opponent of Brüning and the smasher of 'palace' revolts, into a tender nurse. Those few people who saw him during this time have remarked upon this transformation—it was as if he had been translated to another sphere.

The tumultuous crowds which thronged around Göring's car as it passed from village to town, and from town to hamlet, gave Carin great happiness. She saw that her husband was coming into the place of power for which she and he had slaved and suffered untiringly for many years. The warmth of the people's welcome made up for the exile in Austria and Italy, and the pawnshop days in Sweden. She must have thought with the great Hohenzollern who made her husband's Prussia during the eighteenth century: 'I can see the promised land from afar, but I shall not enter it.'

During the summer of 1931 Göring made several visits to Rome, and the opposition Press had for several months carried on a bitter and satirical storm of abuse as to his motives. It implied that he had gone to make obeisance to the Pope and to arrange for the Holy Father's blessing to a Nazi regime. To all this Göring replied: 'Yes, I have been in Rome, but my visit was in no way a pilgrimage as a delegate of the N.S.D.A.P. On such a pilgrimage one would have sent a Catholic. I myself hail from an old Protestant family. I have not conferred with the Pope himself—only with the members of his staff. I have pointed out to them that their assertions are wrong when they say that the N.S.D.A.P. seek to revive the old pagan worship of Wotan in Germany. I also told them that the party stands by positive Christianity, but at the same time I pointed out to them quite clearly the expectations the Leader had

voiced that the Catholic Church had not to mix up in the political matters of the German people. . . . When people ask me again what I have done in Rome,' he concluded ironically, 'I shall answer that I have brought back two chests, in the one the money from Mussolini, in the other the money from the Pope, for Hitler.' This showed clearly the path that Göring intended to follow in religious matters, once the reins of Government came into his hands.

The world depression hit Germany harder than any other country. To pay reparations she had either to borrow or to increase the margin of export trade. Leading up to the crash in the summer of 1931 she had done both. Her manufactured goods had been dumped in every country in a feverish effort to pay dividends on her foreign capital and to contribute to the reparation and loan fund. Crisis abroad had contracted markets, and factory after factory closed down, bringing down with them the banks and insurance companies, which had financed industry beyond the scope of pure banking functions. This has always been a weakness of the German banking system, and explains why a trade crisis will cause a bank crisis more readily than in any other country. The scandal of the North German Wool Concern caused the failure of the Darmstaedter Bank, and other similar causes depleted the Dresdener Bank so badly that the Government had to rush to its rescue by subscribing for 300 million marks of new preference shares. The flight from the mark had begun. On 13 July the Government closed all the banks, after guaranteeing depositors, and the Stock Exchanges shut down.

A flight of foreign capital began, and the Hoover Moratorium under which a standstill for one year was

138 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

provided for, came too late to prevent a real crash. The savings bank lost one-seventh of their deposits due to panic-stricken depositors' withdrawals, and in a few weeks unemployment increased by several millions. The flight of money abroad was stemmed by the impositions of various restrictions, and a financial dictatorship was established. A Press control was instituted and Chancellor Brüning took from the President the right the Constitution gave him, the right to rule by decree, no less than thirty of which Hindenburg signed and handed to him between the first day of the run on the banks and 1 August.

Brüning had made good his threat to Göring, and the operation of these decrees made the working of the Nazi opposition impossible. In October 1931 a huge rally of all the militant forces of the Right parties took place in Bad Harzburg. This was the wedding ceremony of the Nazis to the Nationalists. On this day Hitler and Hugenberg stood side by side in an open avowal of the alliance. 'Behind us stand twelve million Germans,' Hitler said, 'and they are all convinced that our united front is necessary to the solving of the German problem.' Then and there was founded what has since become known as the 'Harzburger Front,' which was really a solid phalanx of Nationalism which was to sweep Socialism out of Germany.

While great enthusiasm was reigning in Bad Harzburg over the future, Brüning was running to and fro between the Chancellory and the President's Palace. He had made up his mind. Heinrich Brüning sat in the room of Bismarck and dictated a Press notice for all the world to read. 'Germany, by reason of her financial crisis can no longer pay reparations and she will not.' The Socialist Chancellor had stolen quite a lot of thunder which the new front had prepared to release upon a bewildered Germany.

The Nazi guns were spiked in another way ; General Gröener took over the portfolio of the Interior, which gave him, in addition to his 100,000 Reichswehr, 150,000 policemen, or in other words, a total strength of 250,000 armed and trained men with which to face any attempt at a ' Putsch ' of any magnitude. For over a year Brüning had astutely kept his own faction in order and the foreign creditors at bay by holding up Hitler as the bad man of the piece. He suavely insinuated to both sides the possibilities if the National Socialists reigned in his stead.

.

Carin Göring's mother had died in September, and the day following the news Hermann Göring took his wife to Stockholm to attend the funeral. The doctors told her that she could not stand the journey, but she undertook it, and the day afterwards was taken worse than ever she had been before.

Meanwhile, in Berlin, Hindenburg, impressed by the growing strength of the Nazi party and the union with Hugenberg's Nationalists, of which party he himself, before his acceptance of the Presidency, had been a pillar, invited Hitler to discuss his policy with him. The ' old Gentleman ' had influences around him which were daily counselling a repudiation of Brüning, the hunger Chancellor. A way was being sought to find the Nazis a place in the Government and thus end their opposition, thereby, it was hoped, to bring out the constructive side of their leaders and to present a more solid front to European opinion. Göring's presence in the Wilhelmstrasse was absolutely essential. Hitler was not a member of the Reichstag, while Göring was the leader of the National Socialist party in the National Assembly.

In Stockholm Hermann Göring was watching by the

sick-bed of his wife. The message came from Berlin that he was wanted urgently to call upon the President, with the leader of his party. Here was a conflict of emotions. For ten long years he had dragged a sick and weakened woman half round Europe, in poverty and degradation, taken her from a comfortable home to be his companion in a life to which any woman was ill suited. Side by side they had struggled, never once complaining. Day by day they had cheered one another with a smile, and both had thought of the empty exchequer. Then the tide had turned. Conditions of living during the past year had improved, and gradually he had been able to provide more of the creature comforts. The Nazi movement was sweeping Germany. This hand-written letter from his friend and leader meant that recognition had really come. His party chief needed him—but so did his wife—she was dying.

Without hesitation Carin Göring told him where his duty lay—in Berlin. Womanlike, she knew the frailty of human nature. She had seen through Ludendorff. Experience with a hard world had taught her that few remain to take the blows, but many are in at the distribution of the prizes. Having suffered with her husband all these years for political principles, a suffering which had reduced her expectation of life, naturally weak though she was, by twenty years, she did not wish, although she herself knew that she could not share them, that her husband should lose the honours. And so, at a word from one of the noblest women in modern political history, Hermann Göring went back to Berlin, with a heart of lead, to take another step along the thorny path to his destiny, to stand at the side of the most remarkable and perplexing man Europe has ever seen, before the Wotanlike hero of Tannenberg.

The main idea of this first interview between Hindenburg and Hitler was to enable the President to weigh up

the qualities of the National Socialist leader. This was the first time that they had met face to face and spoken with each other. The old man listened to the younger men's views on domestic and foreign politics, but while he was convinced of their sincerity, he did not understand their politics. Everything put forward smacked too much of change, but on reflection, he thought that it all sounded a change for the better. For many years he had suffered the eyesore of the Republican flag, and the Nazis had sworn to restore the old one. In the ranks of Hitler's party there were more gentlemen than in all the others. The ex-Crown Prince sanctified the movement by his presence in it, and there was this young fellow Göring, to whom his late Imperial Master had awarded the order of the House of Hohenzollern and the *Pour le mérite*, on top of a whole row of other decorations for bravery. Hindenburg had heard that the best of German society called at the Göring establishment and called him friend—he had also heard that some while ago the Görings had been invited to stay at Doorn. But, wait a moment, what had Meissner told him.¹ The Nazi programme included the encouragement of the holding of small parcels of land by the peasant class. Really, this was as bad as Brüning² with his

¹ Dr. Otto Meissner. Official State Secretary to the President of Germany. Has served under Ebert, Hindenburg, and Hitler. When Ebert took office he found Meissner in one of the Government offices and decided that he was possessed of such astute ability that he should be appointed permanent personal secretary. When Hindenburg took over, his friends expected him to dismiss Meissner, but the Field-Marshal is reputed as having said: 'No, bad for the organization. Why, I always retained the existing adjutant whenever I took over a new regiment.' That aptly describes Dr. Meissner. When Adolf Hitler became Führer in the place of the office of President, he also agreed to a continuation of Meissner's services.

² Brüning had for several years suggested a scheme whereby parts of land not tilled by the large East Prussian landowners should be acquired by the State and divided up into small-holdings. A great controversy arose over this. One side said that he contemplated pursuing a policy of confiscation and his own faction declared that the policy would have

parcelling up ideas. Still, if the streets told a true tale, both these fellows had the people behind them, and with the nation behind the movement it could show other countries their places. Well, he would think about their ideas.

The only intimation to the foreign and domestic Press, at the time, was an official notice passed through the Wolff Telegraph Agency, on the evening of the actual day, 10 October 1931: 'The Reichpresident to-day received Mr. Adolf Hitler and Reichstag Deputy Captain Hermann Göring (retired) and took from them a detailed report on the plans of the National Socialist Movement. Following upon this, discussions took place on the question of home and foreign politics.'

On 17 October 1931 Hermann Göring received the sad news of his wife's death. He was turned to stone, and the prospects held out by the meeting of Hitler and himself with Hindenburg seemed bitter irony.

Between the 10th and 17th Göring had been busily preparing a new attack on the Brüning Cabinet. He had marshalled his fellow-deputies in the Reichstag, and the party in the States was prepared for an election. On top of all this the Presidential election was not far off, and it was, at the time, assumed that Hindenburg would retire.

In the midst of these preparations Göring had to rush to Sweden and attend the funeral of his wife. Mourned by relations and friends, the last earthly remains of Carin Göring were laid in the grounds of the simple

arranged for the purchase of the land out of State funds at a price agreed upon by arbitration. In any case, the quality of the land was not of the best and the settlers would all probably have gone bankrupt, without some form of subsidy, for the first ten years. Dr. Brüning, since he left Germany in 1933, has himself told the writer that he was against anything that even implied expropriation in this problem. He declared that the draft Act was in the office of the Reichstag for anyone to peruse. However, to the outsider this must remain an unsolved problem of German politics of that period.

little church at Lovoe, near Drottningholm, to the accompaniment of many broken voices singing 'A firm Castle is our God,' and her favourite song, 'Home, Sweet Home,' which the dead lady had learned at the knee of her English grandmother, and which she herself had sung so often in her troubled life.

Back to Germany the troubled Göring went and buried his anguish in a feverish activity. Ernst Roehm had for some while been back in the National Socialist movement, and from now onward, in his capacity of Chief of Staff of the Sturm Abteilungen, he relieved Göring of the military side of the movement, thus enabling him to attend completely to the political work of the Reichstag. It was in this time that the plans were made for control of the Reich in the event of success coming to the N.S.D.A.P. Each Ministry was filled in in pencil with the name of the most suitable candidate. The Nazi party had also organized a Flying Corps and made no attempt to hide the fact. On public airports, frequented by international passenger air-liners, could be seen hangers bearing the inscription S.A. Luft Staffel (Sturm Abteilung Air Squadron), and district leaders came to use the small aeroplanes as a means of transport. Week-end flying was encouraged. The Aero Club von Deutschland and the Deutsche Luftsport Verband had become the special preserves of all forces of the Right, and at Tempelhof Aerodrome, Staaken Airfield, and the Johannisthal Aerodrome, it became a common sight to see Heinkel, Klemm, Messerschmitt, and Fokker light aeroplanes being flown by members of these clubs who were active members of the National Socialists, Steel Helmets, and Nationalist party. The drive to make young Germany more air-minded had become a part of the constructive work of National Socialism, to which Göring lent his utmost support. Ernst Udet, Bruno Loerzer, von Schlei (the Black

Knight of the Western front and a friend of Richthofen's) carried out aerobatics over the heads of many thousands of startled but highly enthusiastic Germans.

The turn of the year 1931-32 saw Germany struggling in a greater helplessness than ever. Anarchy was openly sweeping the streets of the big cities and the small towns—the country dweller was as impoverished as the people in the towns. Opposing private armies, equipped with hunting-knives, knuckle-dusters, loaded canes, and oftentimes with revolvers, met each other in the squares, main thoroughfares, and narrow lanes throughout the disturbed country. The youth of all organizations were naturally more provocative than the staid political-minded elders. The breaking of heads was consequently left invariably to the youngsters. In the classroom and in sport, the youth of Germany was divided, and a return to medieval times was being witnessed. The tilt-yard, true, had not returned, but its modern counterpart was very much in evidence.

When a band of young Communists marched gaily down the street, singing :

‘ Every wheel sings “ Red Front ”
we protect the Soviet Union,’

a posse of National Socialists would appear as if conjured up by magic and respond, if possibly, more heartily :

‘ Brothers, Hitler leads us
when the hour is ripe.
Deep in North, high in South
dawns the German morn.
With us marches the new time.’

The operatic part of the processional performance over, the two sides would proceed to lay about each other with any weapon near to hand. The casualties would crawl home to be bandaged by their mothers, sisters, or wives. Political murder became a regular front-page

piece of news in every German newspaper, and all sides gave a most solemn and official funeral to their dead. Blame must naturally be imputed to all parties, but in the year 1932 the attack most certainly came more frequently from the Communists than from the Nazis. The value of life in Republican Germany was at a discount, and a murder perpetrated for the sake of a party stood at a high premium.

The Weimar constitution had abolished capital punishment and the removal of a fear of retribution from the State loosed many a death-blow, which would otherwise have been withheld. With a good lawyer, many a murderer escaped with a nominal two years' sentence, and often he was allowed out on parole because the jails were too full.

The firebrand Göring was in the front of all the big Nazi demonstrations of this period. 'Germany awake, Judah perish,' was written across his banner and sprang from his tongue like a fiery sword. 'We are not a nation of Helots,' he would declaim. 'I would rather that all our children die than that they shall remain for ever in bondage, starving for a crime they know not what.' Bitter as the words were, they succeeded always in obtaining from the crowds a united assent. They were starving anyhow, and the future looked forlorn. Such a terrible indictment was being built up against the Jewish section in Germany that most of this ill-used race began to shiver in their shoes. The rich Jews got out with most of their cash and belongings before the pogrom of 1933, leaving their less fortunate brethren to makeshift the best they could. There was very little of the commonly supposed brotherhood of the Jewish race shown by these plutocratic Jews of Germany towards the small Jewish tradesman, dealer or professional man, who had gradually to make their way abroad as refugees and who have since come to receive kindnesses

146 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY
in England, France, and America from the hands of the
Gentile race, which was denied them by many of their
own.

.

For some while the brothers Otto and Gregor Strasser had not seen eye to eye with the policy of Hitler, Göring, and Goebbels. Both brothers were members of the old guard of the party, with a membership going back to the Munich days. They were attracted to the party by the ideas of Gottfried Feder, who believed in a form of politics which appeared to be more Communistic than Nationalistic. He would destroy the right of capital to receive reward, by abolishing, as he called it, 'the thralldom of Interest.' The ownership of land was in danger, and one could read into his programme a complete participation by the proletariat in the wealth of the few. Lenin appeared to be a more suitable leader of Feder's idea of National Socialism than Adolf Hitler. These two Strassers had sold their chemists' business in the early days to subscribe to the funds of the N.S.D.A.P., and for long months the leaders wondered, in the light of this, at their apparent impending open defection. Whenever Gregor Strasser spoke from the Nazi benches in the Reichstag he was applauded by the Government side. More and more he was moving to a break with his party, and from the early part of 1932 the Nazi movement was riven with internecine strife, making headway difficult. Money was running low, but always some section or supporter of the party came forward with 50,000 marks or so. While Göring was harassing Brüning, the Strasser faction was publishing books, periodicals, and pamphlets, all pointing to the change of policy that was coming over the Nazi movement. Yet they made no definite break. Their conduct led to much heart-burning among the bigger industrialists, to

whose interests party splitting would come most inopportune. Communism was being fanned to such a degree that riots were legion and, for instance, in Berlin, the Communist vote had risen to about a million out of a total electorate of 2,709,257, making the German capital, next to Moscow, the biggest Communist stronghold in the world.

The Brüning Cabinet had naturally been well aware of the conference of Hitler and Göring with Hindenburg in the autumn of the previous year, and it had made several attempts to reconcile the Nazis to a policy of collaboration. Brüning had personally asked Göring to allow of the reintroduction of the *Burgfrieden*,¹ which would prevent broken heads and further attacks on the Government in the anti-Government Press and in the constituencies. Brüning himself admitted that the move would have relieved his own desperate situation. Then General Groener in his capacity of Minister of the Interior called and suggested that Adolf Hitler should join the Government with the portfolio of Foreign Affairs. To both these suggestions Göring turned a deaf ear, to the latter pointing out that National Socialism, with its huge membership behind it (at that time) of twelve million, could not join in a coalition Cabinet, having only one voice. National Socialism could not keep its promise to the people unless it had complete control of the Government of the Reich.

In his New Year address to the German Nation President von Hindenburg appeared to support his Chancellor, Brüning, and at the same time to show that he had imbibed some of the doctrines of Hitler after that momentous interview in the autumn. 'The terrible sacrifices that we are making,' he declared,

¹ This was a mutually agreed upon interlude between the parties. They all undertook not to hold meetings or demonstrations, and its favourite period was from a few days before Christmas Eve until after the New Year.

'justify us in appealing before the whole world against obstacles being placed in the way of our national recovery by the imposition of intolerable burdens.

'In the question of disarmament, too, Germany must not be debarred from her undoubted rights. Our claim to equal security with other nations is so clear that it cannot be contested.' The speech showed clearly at the time to those who had remembered the October meeting, that if the 'old Gentleman' would have no dealings openly with Hitler, he at least leaned towards his philosophy, for, on no other occasion had he ventured to speak so openly of Germany's right to rearm. Throughout the tenure of his office he had kept strenuously to a policy of non-aggravation of the foreigner, for he doubtless bore in mind his own part in European affairs between 1914 and 1918, and realized that jingoism too publicly uttered would have brought the nations on Germany's heel like a pack of wolves from his beloved East Prussia. When Hindenburg made this speech he had only three more months to run in office. He wished to retire. He wanted to spend the remaining few days of his life away from this madness of Berlin, with its multiplicity of parties and intrigue. Brüning approached Göring to persuade Hitler and Hugenberg to agree to a continuance of the Field-Marshal in the office of President of the Reich. After consultation with his party chief, Göring went back to the Chancellory and pointed out that no such arrangement would be acceptable. Hitler followed it up by an official refusal to endorse the Cabinet proposal: 'Article 1 of the Weimar Constitution states that Germany is a Republic deriving all power from the people. Article 41 lays down that the President shall be chosen by the entire people. The Weimar Constitution is the legal basis of the German Republic,' he concluded. By this action Hitler became the champion of the people's rights. He had undertaken

to behave in a legal fashion, and this apparent respect for legality warmed many millions of people towards him and his movement, the result of which was to show in forthcoming elections.

Hindenburg persisted in his attitude and prepared to retire. His friends pressed him to stand for re-election, and after such pressure he decided to offer himself to the electorate. In a long speech to the people, in which he explained that his reason for standing again was not a political one, but rather out of a sense of duty to the Fatherland, he concluded: 'In my view there is only one genuine National goal—the fusion of all sections of our people for their fight for existence, the self-less devotion of every German to the stern struggle for the maintenance of our nation.'

This was somewhat paradoxical, for the aged President knew that he would have Hitler in the lists against him, he knew that because of the existence of the Harzburger Front he could not count upon Hugenberg's Nationalists and his own Stahlhelm, an organization of which he was honorary president, had entered its joint chairman, Colonel Dösterberg, as a candidate.

Hermann Göring, in one of his speeches in support of Hitler's candidacy, warned the electorate that the time had come to call a halt to Germany's downward trend. He declared that he was determined to abolish the form of Government that came into being in November 1918, and he warned his listeners that with the passing of the system would go its adherents. The most peculiar thing about the whole of the German picture at the time is that in spite of these threats, or perhaps because of them, to abolish democracy and to inaugurate a dictatorship of National Socialism, votes increased, and more and more Communists joined the movement.

About this there can be no doubt.

German politics have ever been a source of puzzlement

to foreign observers, but in 1932 there was presented the paradox of Communists, dissatisfied with their own leaders, joining the party representing the complete antithesis of their Marxian doctrines, and of disgruntled Nazis leaving their old party, either to disappear from politics or to throw in their lot with the opposition. On closer inspection the cause was not far to seek. Poverty, not the failure of German militarism in 1918, had bred Communism, just as the new poverty of the middle classes, through inflation, had fostered Nazism. Quite 80 per cent of German Communists were followers of Marxist doctrines because it fed their stomachs. For many years money was fairly plentiful in the German Communist party from a source in common which supplies the sinews of war to the official Communist parties of all other democratic States, and weekly allowances, soup-kitchens, and holiday camps, bought the membership in Germany, as the same amenities had bought membership elsewhere. When the sources of this finance decided upon a policy of retrenchment of its support of official Communism in Germany, after it had become fairly patent that the Germans were in post-war days what they had always been, rabid Nationalists, thousands of 'Communists' were without means of support. Concurrently with the poverty of Communism the Nazi party rose to a condition of affluence, and the subsidizing of members caused the erstwhile Communists to join up with this movement, which after all was more Germanic than the strange growth which was fostered from the Karl Liebknecht Haus.

Unemployment figures in Germany were higher than they had ever been; 48 per cent of the total trade union membership was completely out of work, and a further 25 per cent was working on short time. This was the dissatisfied material then that fed the Nazi fire, and upon whose ears the promises of Hitler, Göring, and Goebbels

fell as sweet music. Whatever their cause of dissatisfaction now, in 1938, with the Government of the Reich, it is not one of starvation—they at least work and eat, thus fulfilling one key Nazi slogan, 'Arbeit und Brot.'

Towards the close of the Presidential election in March, Göring made a shattering speech, which shows that, while he had to support his leader against the candidacy of Hindenburg, he carried in his heart a wholesome respect for the old Field-Marshal. It was a speech that brought agreement from the throats of over 80,000 people assembled in a Berlin sports stadium.

'German men and women! Only a short time parts us from the hour which will be the hour of destiny for the German Nation. The German people shall themselves decide if German history can begin again or if German history shall be for ever—finished! It comes—the day! which will speak its iron yes or no, if the catastrophe, if the breakdown of November 1918, if the want of the last thirteen years shall lead completely to chaos or breakdown into Bolshevism or if the new rise of Germany begins, allowing once again the German people to carry on the glorious history of their forefathers.

'The German people themselves, whom I love with my deepest soul, with all the feelings of my heart, will judge for themselves the system which places them in dishonourable bondage, of internal and external slavery. The protests of the suffering German people will be a tremendous scream against their torture, a torture which they have endured, mentally and physically, for thirteen weary long years. The people rise——! They will be free again—internal and external. We National Socialists have for years been the open accusers in the name of the people. We accuse the System! We accuse the parties which created the System. We accuse the men who represent it. We have shaken the people into an awakening. We have taken care that the German people cannot again be put to slumber with the narcotic of always new betraying promises, which brought always ill-luck. We have laboured for years and years to create a new Nation, and Heaven will bless this tremendous work and those who are doing it, from the lowest S.A. man up to our leader, because God will not allow slavery.

'To the upholders of the System, all that in good society

would be called moral has been scorned and declared as immoral, while all that is immoral, in the eyes of decent beings, has been held up as a paragon of all the virtues.

‘Everything that was holy to the German people they have broken and trodden in the dirt. They have torn to pieces the great figures and achievements in German history. Now, with the waters of retribution fast reaching to their necks, in terror they remember the great happenings of the battle of Tannenberg—and they remember the men who fought this battle—the men over whom, during these post-war years, they have poured their dirt-buckets. I say that these men have no right to remember this past which they have betrayed and which never belonged to them. They have no right to warn the German people against the “bad luck” of our programme. I ask these men of the System, what was your programme in these thirteen years of ruin and breakdown? Which of your countless programmes has given you the right to burrow under and fell an honourable, clean, and working nation? What did you put in the place of the old Germany? You tell us to-day what you have done so far. You say that we would destroy the economy of Germany and will make us forget that German economy is already destroyed. You say that we would ruin the finances and will make us forget that it is you who have already emptied the till—— You say that we would bring an inflation, you will make us forget that your men and method brought the most terrible of all inflations to the German people. You say that foreign Powers would intimidate and attack Germany when National Socialism would become victorious, but you would have us forget that it was you who praised the Dawes Pact and voluntarily, in Locarno, gave up all that was squeezed out of us by this disgraceful treaty and, to crown it all, make of Germany a slave for generations to the Young Plan.

‘Now, where everything breaks at once, when millions awaken, you try to hide yourselves behind the back of a great historical name.

‘In their fright rise the international pacifists, war-service shirkers, Social Democrats, and the Centre, which is united with the Marxists, all with the Prussian Field-Marshal as their shield. Look at this madness! On their red festoons and buntings is written the name—Hindenburg—— Here you have the whole deep mendacity of the System. . . .’

The result of the Presidential election was known on

SHADOW OF THE HAMMER AND SICKLE 153

13 March, but there was need for a second ballot, because, although Hindenburg had secured a large vote, it did not give him a clear majority.

	Votes.
Field-Marshal von Hindenburg .	18,661,736
Adolf Hitler (National Socialist) ¹ .	11,338,571
Thaelmann (Communist) . .	4,982,079
Düsterberg (Nationalist). . .	2,557,876

The second ballot gave the Nazi candidate over 2,000,000 more votes, which proved clearly which way the wind was blowing. Undoubtedly, respect for the Field-Marshal by many of his old warriors in the electorate kept them from voting for Hitler.

The figures of the second ballot, declared on 10 April, gave the retiring President just that little margin to return him.

	Votes.
Hindenburg . . .	19,359,642
Hitler . . .	13,417,460
Thaelmann . . .	3,706,388

It will be noticed that the Communist vote was down by more than a million. This election had practically ruined the Nazi party financially, and the result was

¹ Until just before the nomination of candidates for the election Adolf Hitler was not even a German citizen. His friend, Dr. Frick, a one-time official in the police department in Munich at the time of the 'Putsch,' was a National Socialist Minister in a coalition State government in Thuringia during 1930, and had arranged to make him a petty official in a small town, Hildburghausen. This did not go through, and the anti-Nazi Press dug it up in 1932 and made much of it, to ridicule Hitler in an attempt to embarrass him and to induce him to stand down. In the meantime, however, the Nazi Minister, Klagges, in the coalition Government of Brunswick, on 24 February, formally appointed Hitler *Regierungsrat* (Government councillor) in his State Government, and thereby automatically qualified him for naturalization as a German subject. Under the Weimar constitution, any foreigner holding an official post under a State, or the Reichs Government, qualified automatically as a German.

154 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY
disheartening to every organiser. On all hands it was being attacked, and the Strasser brothers found many who rallied to their side. Göring's hope of destroying the Brüning Cabinet seemed to have receded farther than ever.

In the Germany of 1932 elections appeared to occupy the whole time of the individual. The Presidential election over, State and Municipal elections were in full swing. The Nazis had hardly time to get over their bitter disappointments of March and April when they had again to go into the fray in the whole of Prussia and some of the lesser States. Money was very, very scarce. The party-owned Press made some profits which of course helped the electoral fights. The industrial backers were withholding support in any quantity until they could see how the wind was blowing, so it was, in this difficult time, the members of the party and they alone who kept the wheels of National Socialism oiled. At meetings it was no uncommon sight to see married couples give up their wedding-rings to party leaders to be sold to provide funds.

Brüning, just after the fateful result of the Presidential elections, was planning to prohibit the S.A. and S.S. throughout the whole of the Reich. This would have made the Nazi party almost impotent for the coming Prussian Diet elections. On 14 April the whole of the uniformed section of the National Socialist party was proscribed throughout the Reich, and in Prussia at least the police took over all Nazi party headquarters. This prohibition was the final spark to set Germany alight from border to border. Every Nazi was furious, and there were many millions of them. Even Hindenburg, who had signed the decree for Brüning, hesitated, was inclined to withdraw, and then hit upon the brilliant compromise of also banning the Reichsbanner, the

republican equivalent of the Sturm Abteilungen. But Groener, in his capacity of War Minister, advised against this move, and the President went on a visit to his country-place at Neudeck, and the whole thing was over.

Not with Hermann Göring, however, who took up the fight in the Reichstag and poured his broadsides into the poor miserable Groener, who had to be there to answer in the debate on the proscription.

‘The prohibition of the S.A. is a moral disarmament of freedom by the Government. The right to live of the people has never before had stronger spokesmen than in our movement and its fighters. Never has the S.A. been a military league; that the Government knows. Internal politics are the cause for the banning of the S.A. Our opposition bases its right to prohibition on the grounds that the S.A. and S.S. are military leagues. I ask the Chancellor of the Reich: Is it right that the German Embassy in Paris has sent urgent telegrams telling you that it is a necessity that the S.A. be prohibited in relation to events arising out of the disarmament and other conferences. You always operate with an eye to the foreign Press, thinking that if you make it appear that National Socialism is weak, then you will get better advantages from the other States. It would be more purposeful to deal in an opposite manner and to accentuate the strong national will of our movement, in order to prove to the foreign Powers that this movement demands the beginning of a different foreign policy and that this demand is the voice of the people. The banning of the S.A. is a demonstration against the national will and against the rights of our people.’

At this juncture he was interrupted by catcalls and whistling from the Government side, accompanied by cries of ‘Traitor of the working classes.’ He then turned to the part of the House from which these cries emanated and replied: ‘We had better keep to our departments, for I think, gentlemen, that you specialize in high treason.’ Returning to his theme, he continued:

‘Do not believe that by removing his brown shirt you can take away the spirit from the S.A. man. When other parties often change their policies, even as their shirt, here spirit and

policy remain the same in spite of prohibition and terror. Faithfulness and comradeship, which to many of you has become a phantom, like your oath, are for us fundamental to the union of German men, who, united, stand for their country and for their people. Therefore, it is natural that to-day, after the conclusive judgment of the Cabinet, we voice our suspicions. A Government which, internally, externally, and in political economy, has lost every battle, can no longer ask for confidence. It is always so in history. When a general has lost a battle he has to go. Troops are not there to bleed to death for a general, and a people does not exist in order that a government, which is not in the position to master the situation, shall ruin it. And so we declare to-day that the Cabinet no longer enjoys the trust of the people, the people are clamouring for new men! We turn to all who want to help to work for the rebuilding of Germany. Just now, when we have emerged from the election stronger than ever, we reach out our hand to a united reconstruction, but everybody must know that, basically, a new course has to be taken. We are not going to put new beauty spots on the old patchwork. To those who do not take our hand we declare that we will go on fighting ruthlessly. We will fulfil our historic mission to reconcile all classes and to make it clear to all that the question of the Nation's destiny has to be placed above the petty questions of everyday life, and that the classes, confessions, and professions have to bow down to the problem of the destiny of the German Nation. As a supposition to this the Brüning Cabinet must go. It must go in order that Germany can live.'

This speech had the effect of proving to Hindenburg two things, about both of which he had until now only the vaguest of notions, kept in seclusion as he was by the ring of Barons and Generals behind Brüning. That the Brüning Cabinet, despite its emergency measures, could not for long keep order in the Reich, and that the Reichswehr leaned more and more to a policy of using the Nazis, for within a week or two General Groener resigned, thereby showing full well that he knew that the decree, for which he had pressed, proscribing the Nazi Storm Troops, was a political and tactical mistake. General Kurt von Schleicher, at that time the chairman

of the political group of Generals of the Reichswehr and reputed strong man of Germany, from whom, incidentally, the foreign powers expected much, had begun to fetch and carry for the Right, although he liked to be known as the Socialist General. From now on he pursued a policy of intrigue between the Presidential Palace, the Chancellory, and the Kaiserhof Hotel.¹ A campaign of whispering sprang up which had as its hoped-for outcome Schleicher's puppets in a new coalition Government and Gregor Strasser as the Prime Minister of Prussia.

Of all these intrigues Göring was well aware, and, in the case of Strasser, ready to jump upon any action which savoured of any one member of the party digging himself in at the expense of the movement. And so the hot summer of 1932 began, with the Generals overhauling their preparations and the Social Democratic parties shivering in their shoes—a target between the Nazis and the extreme Leftists, with the Reichswehr, ready at any moment, to pounce and declare a military Dictatorship. This was approximately the state of affairs when in desperation Hindenburg dismissed Brüning from the Chancellorship on 30 May.

.

During the forty-eight hours immediately following upon Brüning's departure there was much coming and going between the Kaiserhof and the Wilhelmstrasse, and between the private houses of Nazi leaders and a certain Franz von Papen, notorious to foreigners as a very inefficient and clumsy attaché at the German Embassy in Washington during the period of America's neutrality in the Great War, but known only to Germans as the owner of a paper, *Germania*, a member of the

¹ Hitler's Berlin home at the time.

158 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY
inner circle of the Herren Club, and a friend of
Hindenburg and von Schleicher.

Arising out of these discussions, an understanding was arrived at between the Nazi leaders and von Papen. Göring had his way. If von Papen wanted any support from the Nazis in the Reichstag he must undertake to remove the ban on the S.A. and S.S. immediately upon taking office.

So on 1 June the Reich awoke to the startling announcement that Hindenburg had appointed von Papen Chancellor. Whereupon the masses asked: 'Who is this Papen,' while those more in the know said: 'Monstrous! a Cabinet of Junkers and industrialists.' The twelve million voters who had supported Hitler looked in vain for his name among the list of Ministers.

Office had been offered, but the Hitler leaders again pointed out that it must be all or nothing. Both Göring and Goebbels pointed out that as the Nazi policy had defeated Brüning in the Reichstag, then quite obviously parliamentarily Hitler should have been invited to form a Cabinet. If the President consented to the carrying out of the Nazi programme in full, then consent would be given to a coalition. On this point Hindenburg did not see eye to eye and appointed Papen as Chancellor, invoking Article 48 of the Constitution in his support. This clause provides for a virtual Dictatorship and assumes a state of emergency. That there was a state of emergency in Germany at the time there can be no doubt. Throughout the country all classes had reached the end of their patience and their pockets. The Nazis, more particularly, were still smarting under the prohibition of their Storm Troops, and it was with difficulty that the personality of Hitler kept their tempers in check. Göring was inciting their passions with his inflammatory speeches, and it had got about that he had told General von Schleicher, now War Minister in the

new Cabinet, that unless the decree was repealed immediately, 'things must take their natural course.' Von Schleicher knew full well what the natural course would be. Streets running in blood and the Reichswehr called out to put an end to the conflict.

Papen seemed to have forgotten his pledge to Hitler. It was enough for him to have made the promise of repeal. He had assured the President that he had the Nazis behind him, which was a condition precedent to his being given office. So von Schleicher went back to von Papen and reported Göring's conversation, whereupon he hastily repealed the ban of the Storm Troops, for he did not want to have the Nazis 'behind him' in the other sense, so early in his chancellorial career.

Everywhere the Sturm Abteilungen beat to quarters. The troops of the other three 'armies' contested their presence in the streets, and in Altona on one day alone seventeen persons were killed as a result of friction arising out of a demonstration. Göring stalked through the length and breadth of the land, and his biting attacks upon von Papen's conduct of the Lausanne and Geneva conferences on reparations and disarmament incensed the people to a still further greater degree of restlessness. The repeal of the ban of the S.A. was looked upon by all parties as a sign of weakness of the new Government.

The culmination of all this undertow was shown vividly in the general elections in July. On 20 July von Papen suspended the Government of Prussia and had himself appointed Reich Commissioner of Prussia, ruling through his own appointees. Prussia being the largest State in Germany, this action gave von Papen the control of its police force—which could be used to enforce his will against the Nazis.

Then began a drama which the outside world has failed properly to comprehend. Acts of violence perpetrated by the rowdies of all parties without exception

became such a menace that decree after decree was promulgated forbidding marches and demonstrations and banning meetings. The South German States refused to recognize the Reich's Government's decrees repealing the ban on the S.A., and that Bavaria, which had given nourishing support in 1923 to the squawling infant movement, now came out in open antagonism to the National Socialists.

Minister after Minister throughout the various States declared that they would only surrender to force. No one knew to what they were expected to surrender, but it sounded brave, especially when reminded of an empty cash-box.

The polling-day of the Reich elections came, and, leading up to it, the Government had coerced the masses into believing that it would employ the army if any further nonsense appeared to be contemplated. Therefore the elections were held under the threat of a military dictatorship and many millions of votes were given, not to the Centre party, whose head, von Papen, now held office, but to the Communists and to the Nazis.

In the light of these conditions the Nazi poll was breathtaking. The electorate returned 230 National Socialist members to the Reichstag, who carried with them 37 per cent of the votes, 13,733,000, all gathered under difficult conditions from a bewildered and half-starved electorate.

Göring pressed for the accession to power of his party; the result of the election proved virtually that von Papen was not the strongest political individual in the Reich. On a question of mathematics he was undoubtedly right. But no suggestion came from the President's Palace and the matter could not be taken up in the Reichstag because it was on vacation.

At this period, though in an advanced condition of bankruptcy, due to the many elections of the preceding

months, the Nazis were, politically, the strongest by far of any other movement in the Reich. Whatever has been said of their methods, that is the business of the German people to pronounce judgment upon. Viewed from the grand-stand, however, it appeared that Göring's demand for power was justified.

To his suggestions a presidential deaf ear was turned, so he devised, in company with his party chief, a plan which was submitted to von Schleicher and other politically-minded Reichswehr men. With the support of the Nazis, von Schleicher was to be made Chancellor, and he, out of his friendship with Hindenburg, was to persuade the Field-Marshal to retire, and into his place was to step—Hitler, as President of the Reich. Three or four National Socialist Ministers were to become members of the von Schleicher Cabinet, the Nazis retaining the right to control the police, while the War Department was to remain in duly approved military hands.

The recipients of this plan definitely considered its adoption, but rather shabbily turned it down and passed on the information to others, thereby causing more doubting and heart-burnings. This was a typical state of affairs in Germany at the time—a condition which almost wrecked the Nazi party. Small wonder it is that reprisals were carried out so ruthlessly when ultimately the movement had achieved control, for it had been betrayed right and left. Loose conscience is a condition typical, one may say, inherent, in political movements in all countries, but in Germany, the position being what it was, the Nazi confidences represented almost high treason under the Constitution. A fair parallel of conditions in Germany leading up to Hitler's advent to office would be the intrigues between Cromwell, the Army, and Charles, immediately prior to his 'escape' to Carisbrooke.

Hitler was obsessed by the idea of being the head of an 'authoritative' Cabinet, but Schleicher, although willing enough to work with him, pointed out the difficulties and suggested that he should become Vice-Chancellor.

With the shadow of civil war stalking the land, Hitler went to call upon Hindenburg on 13 August. The offer of the Vice-Chancellorship was made, but Hitler refused again on the grounds that he must be allowed full powers and the right to dispense with parliamentary rule. To which the President replied that he could not square such a proposal with his conscience. What he had been doing for two years for Brüning he refused the man with two hundred and thirty seats in the National Assembly. Directly after this interview Hitler left Berlin for his mountain retreat in Berchtesgaden, leaving Göring to carry on as his political deputy and leader of the party in the Reichstag. With all the authority vested in him, Göring forthwith issued a manifesto stating that all standing in the way of the National Socialist objective would be ruthlessly destroyed. So the last phase of the fight was on.

.

On 30 August 1932 the German Reichstag was invaded by two hundred and thirty Nazi deputies in the brown uniform of the S.A. and the black of the S.S. The last ditch of Democratic Government was being held, but only for a few months. From now on began puppet shows which held the administration of the Reichstag up to ridicule, and it was seen that there were only two real factors at work in German politics, Communism of many hues and die-hard Nationalism, composed of Nazis and the more advanced members of Hugenberg's camp. Both these factors sought to bring about revolution. The Communists by underground methods, and

the Right by an outward show of legality with the threat of the big stick, poised, but held delicately, in reserve. The Right was bound to succeed because it acknowledged one real leader in the house, Göring, the born anti-Democrat, the expression of the rule of might against the ramblings of grey theory, while the Left was led by a cohort of logicians in the best democratic style in not one of whom was vested the right to act on initiative. What has been held out to be the strength of Democracy, the united will, operated by a committee, proved to be its undoing when faced with the deputed single voice of reaction.

Following the tradition of the Reichstag, the election of its President and administrative officers took place, but again, in conformity with custom, the oldest sitting ordinary member temporarily occupied the President's chair to give legality to the proceedings. From among the Communist benches the aged Klara Zetkin¹ was carried to the place of honour and the listener, who had been told that Hitler had swept the polls, stood amazed. From her aged lips a torrent of abuse poured down weakly upon the startled assembly of the Reich. With clichés of Marx and Engels still echoing through the house, Hermann Göring, who had been elected the President of the new Reichstag, stepped up to the tribune of the German people, like a symbol of the times—with the passing from the seat of the President of the aged woman who was the embodiment of the old regime, the place was taken by the young active sky-bird, to announce the coming of the new era in Germany's affairs.

‘I promise to discharge my office neutrally, just, and following the standing orders of the House. I will care for the order and

¹ So ridiculous had the management of the German Reichstag become at that time, that she, elected *in absentia* as she had been at this election, had travelled especially from Moscow at the age of eighty-four to perform the inauguration ceremony.

distinction of this House. I wish it to be understood that I shall see to it that the honour and distinction of the German people shall not be insulted. The honour of the history of the German people, too, shall find in me a worthy custodian. Before the whole of the German people I expressly state that to-day's meeting has proved clearly that the new Reichstag, through its great majority of able men, is capable of conducting the affairs of State without the Government having need for recourse to emergency measures. The fact that we have a National Cabinet¹ fills my soul with hope that I can discharge my office as President of this Reichstag and that the honour of the people, security of the Nation and the freedom of the Fatherland can be the highest guiding stars of all my dealings.'

Thus ended the formal opening of the Reichstag, and its members dispersed to await its opening for normal parliamentary business later in the autumn.

Göring, in believing that the von Papen Government would honour its promises, had by his opening speech committed himself to a policy of repudiation of his own ideas. This was the first and only occasion on which he had weakened in his old set ideas, and the events of the next week proved that he had been wrong in lowering his defence.

Upon discovery that he had been entrapped by the snare of promises, he called the Reichstag together for 12 September, with a view to calling upon the House to depose the Government. Chancellor von Papen, apprised of this move, had decided to use the red portfolio,² having obtained the dissolution decree it contained from the President several days before.

¹ This apparently refers to a hope that the von Papen Government (which was, in a sense, Nationalist) would so conduct itself as to justify Nazi support, in accordance with the arrangement made over the S.A. ban.

² Just as the Chancellor of the Exchequer in England always uses the battered old despatch case on Budget day, so in Germany, by tradition, the dissolution decree is always conveyed to the Chancellor from the President's Palace in a red portfolio—hence the term, which has crept in everyday political use in German affairs.

On 12th September the Nazi faction trooped into the Reichstag primed with orders on the debate and vote. The Government had one motion down—which approximated to a statement of its policy. Before the business before the House could begin, however, Ernst Torgler, a Communist deputy, moved a division of the House on the grounds of no confidence in the Government. Göring put the motion to the Reichstag and it was accepted by the whole House. A Nazi deputy, Dr. Frick, moved the adjournment of the House for a short while and this was agreed upon. This came as a happy respite to both Göring and von Papen. To Göring, the Torgler motion had rather stolen his thunder—the Communist looked as if he would be the champion of the Germans, and the lull gave him an opportunity to consult with Hitler, while von Papen, whose career was filled with such forgetfulness, from cheque-book counterfoils showing payments to secret agents in friendly countries to which he was accredited, to secret dispatches left for the enemy to find, had left the decree for dissolution in the Chancellory. While Göring rushed to take counsel with Hitler, von Papen drove to the Wilhelmstrasse to collect the only powerful weapon he possessed against the hostile Reichstag.

Upon von Papen's return he found the sitting of the House had been resumed. Nevertheless he requested leave to speak, but Göring turned a deaf ear to his appeal, because a division was in progress. 'You can see for yourself that the vote is being counted,' Göring said, whereupon the Chancellor waved his red portfolio above his head and laid it upon the President's table, leaving the Chamber, accompanied by all his Ministers.

The result of the vote announced that the Government had been defeated by 513 to 32. Having announced this result, Göring picked up the dissolution decree and read it to the House, remarking that a Government that was

being dismissed by an almost unanimous vote of the Reichstag could no longer issue effective decrees.

This, of course, did not hold water, because the decree was signed by the President, who made and unmade Governments. However, the incident gave sufficient material for a slanging match between Göring and von Papen, which enlivened the political arena of Germany and gave considerable amusement to foreign diplomats and correspondents. Göring declared, in heat, of course, that he would call the Reichstag for the next day. The Government's answer to the threat was to call out all the police reserves, Berlin garrison, and march four extra battalions of infantry into Berlin from the Brandenburg command. An interesting commentary on the state of affairs in Germany at this time is shown by an apparently Government inspired notice in *Vorwärts*, bearing date-line 11 September 1932, in which 'the Government assert that it did not intend to dissolve the Reichstag. Any assertion to the contrary lacked foundation.' The Government was being conducted in hour by hour stages. Life in Berlin had its sorrows, but it also had its compensations. The people, like the cat, could laugh at its Government, in the absence of a king.

.

Friedrich Hölderlin, more than a century ago, wrote in his *Hyperion*: 'I know of no people more dismembered than the Germans. There are artisans and thinkers, masters and servants, youth and grown-ups—but no human beings. Is this not a battle-field; hands and arms and all the limbs lying in pieces, while the life-blood which has been shed is running away in the sands.' This was admirable metaphor of the condition of the German people at the time of the elections in November 1932. Their economy was ruined, their

young men had no profitable employment, and those few people with money were going to the devil by its help.

Von Schleicher appeared to be the only Minister in von Papen's Cabinet who knew how to conduct the business of the Reich. He threatened to withdraw from the League of Nations and to refuse to attend sessions of the Disarmament Conference unless Germany was granted the rights to which he claimed she was entitled. This attitude, of course, raised a storm in Paris, but he kept to his views and the German Government was not represented at the session of the Disarmament Conference before the November elections.

The elections by now in full swing, the Nazi party was again in the throes of domestic difficulties. Roehm, the Chief of Staff of the S.A., had been chatting over his Left leanings with Strasser and mutterings were being heard among the rank and file. Von Papen, to whom promises came lightly, forgetful of those he had made to Hitler, took upon himself the duty to make a tour of the Rhineland and the Ruhr in order to impress upon the Nazi backers there the patriotic need of withholding further finance from the National Socialist election fund. In this he was partially successful, for the Nazi deficit after the elections ran into millions of marks, and later it was Göring's task to liquidate or find means to liquidate this indebtedness.

During the year 1932 the Nazi movement had a slogan: '*Hib Action*,' an abbreviation of '*Hinein in die Betriebe*,' meaning 'Into the Factories,' and this was actually carried out. Meetings were held in as many factories as speakers could be found for. The policy had accounted for the overwhelming result at the July elections, but the apparent futility of waiting for the Nazis to take power by legal methods led to a considerable falling-off of votes, and not all the personality of a thousand Hitlers, Görings, and Goebbels could move the electorate further.

The fighting and the bitter disappointments of this year had worn every headquarters and area leader down to breaking-point. The dissension in the camp had also become known. The more nationalist or even monarchical elements in the movement had heard of the movements of a certain General Dommès, who was intriguing with Reichswehr circles in an attempt to pave the way for a triumphal return to Germany of the ex-Kaiser. Another Nazi, Count Spretti, in association with Count von Alvensleben, had founded a Kaiser party in Berlin, and rumour was busy with the name of Hermann Göring in connection with this movement. The rank and file of the Nazis pointed to the presence of the Hohenzollern Princes as district leaders in the movement, and asked outright: 'What did it all presage?' Both Hitler and Göring retorted that they had no time for Monarchs, and the events down to the time of writing appear to prove the truth of their statements. A whole sequence of disturbing incidents and internal causes then appeared to have conspired against the Nazi movement in these winter days.

New decrees had been promulgated in which political murders were punishable by death, and long terms of imprisonment could be meted out to offenders for breach of emergency laws. This made irresponsible persons in all parties sit up and think, but in no way was the terror of the streets abated, because the police were never on hand at the time of the affrays. The police at that time seemed to occupy the role of observer rather than the preventatives of a crime.

The Harzburger Front was also cracking, and the Nazi Press and the Hugenberg Press entered into a competition of recrimination. Whole district organizations broke down, due to the disagreement now patent between the N.S.D.A.P. heads and the sub-leaders of Left inclination.

Strikes and riots were on the increase throughout the whole of the Reich ; the ex-enemy countries had pushed the problem of reparations on one side and were waiting daily for Germany to burst into open revolution or for a military *coup d'état* by the Reichswehr. Those with large investments in the country almost prayed for the latter solution. At the beginning of November, just a bare week from the day of the poll, a transport strike broke out in Berlin and paralysed the city. This strike was supported by Göring as the Nazi leader in the Reichstag and by Goebbels as district leader, whereupon the Socialist Press denounced the action as Bolshevism. Von Papen called upon the War Ministry to support him in a declaration of martial law to break the strike, but Chancellor or no Chancellor, the Reichswehr chiefs gave him to understand that they would not allow the army to be mixed up in an industrial dispute. As can be seen, the Reichswehr considered itself an *élite* and aloof organization. It would move only when its own interests were threatened, or possibly, at the command of the Field-Marshal in the President's Palace. The results of the elections were declared on 6 November, and showed a loss of 2,000,000 votes by the Nazis, accompanied by a drop in representation of thirty-three seats. Most of the lost National Socialist votes went to the Communist party and the Nationalist party.

The result of this election proved that while the Nazis had lost way, von Papen's stock had most certainly not risen. Nevertheless, the President allowed him to carry on the Government temporarily.

The leaders of the various leading parties, such as Kaas of the Centre, Hugenberg of the Nationalists, and Hitler, were summoned to the President's Palace with a view to arriving at some useful and permanent coalition. Many writers have assumed what took place between Hitler and Hindenburg ; most have written screeds of

scurrilous stories about that interview, but the fact remains that it was a man to man session, lasting one hour, at which not even Meissner, the State Secretary, or Colonel Oskar von Hindenburg, the President's son and personal adjutant were present. A few days later another interview was arranged, at which were present, in addition to the two main figures of Hindenburg and Hitler, Hindenburg's usual staff and Göring and Frick. The Nazis, as a deputation, informed the President that they could only co-operate with a Government which was led by Hitler as Chancellor. The negotiations broke down, but in his official letter to Hitler, regretting that he could not agree with the Nazi suggestion, Hindenburg showed that he was gradually coming round to the inevitability of a Nazi Government when he concluded that his door 'would be always open' to him. Negotiations with all parties failed and there was nothing for von Papen to do but to resign. General Kurt von Schleicher, who until now had been content with political wire-pulling and a negotiator between his 'friends' Hindenburg and von Papen, was entrusted by the President with the task of forming a Government with himself as Chancellor and Minister of Defence. Hitler had just entered a sanatorium, Göring was left to carry on, and Gregor Strasser was conspiring against both, and had arranged to take over to the Government a large section of disgruntled 'Left' Nazis in the Reichstag. The staunchest members began to lose interest—they had fought for a political and national idea for ten years and now they saw opportunists receiving party office over their heads—and the more headstrong began to make themselves a greater nuisance to the party leaders and to the police. Intrigue and counter-intrigue became the order of the day, and through all this Göring sailed steadfastly on to his goal. Foreign diplomats came to look upon him as the spokesman of the movement and

the prominent in international affairs began to look to him as a strong man who was certain of office. Despite all political set-backs at the polls, Göring was more convinced than ever that power must come to the movement for which he had laboured so long.

〈While he was in Rome preparing opinion for such a contingency, Hitler had taken full advantage of Hindenburg's invitation to 'look in any time you have a suggestion to make.' He laid a programme before the President undertaking to increase the rate of German rearmament and to educate the German youth, through his organization, to an early understanding of the need for freeing Germany completely from the Treaties. The ultimate object being to ensure that Germany would be so strong that she could assert her right, not necessarily by war, but by threat of the wrath to come, to a breaking away from Versailles, and to stand on terms of complete equality with the great Powers. A new agrarian policy was also projected, which envisaged agriculture as a reserve trench in any emergency. Leading up to any such eventuality, the land had to be made a paying proposition.〉

This was a complete reversal of Brüning's policy, which the President had termed 'Agrarian Bolshevism,' and these two main points of the new Nazi idea commended themselves to him and had great weight in swaying his decision of January 1933.

Towards the close of November the Nazi Press published a provisional ministerial list in the event of power being offered to the movement. Chancellor: Hitler; Air Minister, Göring; Defence, von Schleicher; Foreign Affairs, von Neurath; Finance Ministry, Schacht; Home Affairs, Strasser; Economics (Board of Trade), Thyssen; Justice, Frick; Commissioner for Prussia, von Papen.

Still the Presidential Palace frowned upon handing

Germany over to the Nazi party. Then the big guns of business were brought up to effect some sort of decision. Dr. Wilhelm Cuno, the then chairman and managing director of the Hamburg-America Line, pointed out to the President the effect unstable political conditions of Germany, with its consequent low level of foreign trade, were having upon the German Merchant Marine. Hindenburg, fickle as a maid, would still have none of Hitler, although he was ever anxious to parley with him. '... I fear that a Präsidial Cabinet led by Herr Hitler would inevitably develop into a party dictatorship, with the evil result of intensifying still more the dissensions within the German Nation, and I cannot answer to my oath and my conscience for taking such a step.' So what his oath forbade in November it allowed in January. Field-Marshal von Hindenburg, so old and so out of touch with the real life of the German people, guided only by the 'Palace clique,' who wished to see as far as was humanly possible their own Junkerdom in the saddle, was, through no fault of his own, completely deaf and blind to the flames licking higher and higher.

.

The new Reichstag met on 6 December, and, amid a certain amount of comic relief, Hermann Göring was re-elected its President. On this occasion it was General Litzmann, a devotee of Hitler and a warrior of many battles, who discharged the duties of temporary President during the inaugural ceremony. The Generals were turning on the Field-Marshal. In his address Litzmann said that what Brüning, Müller, and von Papen had been granted (*re* the Chancellorship) had been refused Hitler, for whom millions had voted in the Reich. The refrain was taken up by several other general officers in the ranks of the Nazi deputies, and the proceedings were then

allowed to take their formal course. Göring, always contemptuous of democratic institutions, did everything to render the assembly ridiculous. He told them that their life was to be very short—a few weeks at the most. He was ready for any emergency. He knew that the National Socialist party was rent in twain, that Gregor Strasser, now sitting before him on a Nazi mandate, had quite eighty deputies behind him ready to go over to the Schleicher Government. The fact that Schleicher had offered, as reward for the wholesale desertion, the Vice-Chancellorship to Strasser and the plums of office in the Government of Prussia to his fellow-traitors, was also known to him. What was more, Göring knew that the movement owed 12,000,000 marks, and another election fight under such conditions was impossible. He knew that Strasser came to the Reichstag fresh from an audience with Hindenburg. Therefore it was his intention to arrange for the Reichstag to be prorogued.

In order to convey to the Strasser clique that he saw through their tactics, but ostensibly to make himself better acquainted with the new faces in the Reichstag, he shocked the shades of Bismarck, Bülow, and Bethmann-Hollweg by raising to his eyes a pair of binoculars and steadily surveying the sea of faces before him, pausing here and there to consult the list of deputies' photos on his desk.

On 8 November, two days later, Strasser wrote to Adolf Hitler, officially resigning all association with the N.S.D.A.P., including his office as economic adviser. Hoping to be appointed head of the party in the place of Hitler, he announced, in the anti-Nazi Press, that 'he had gone on leave.' Actually Strasser had joined up with the Social Democrats and the Christian Trade Unions, while his brother, Otto, was in Prague directing a 'paper' attack not only against the Nazis but against Germany as a nation.

From this time onward the position was desperate, Göring, Goebbels, Roehm, and Himmler having to form themselves into a *junta* to fight the disobedience rampant within the party, while the Jewish and Socialist Press made much capital out of the crisis caused by Strasser's resignation.

Salaries of district leaders were cut down and the rank and file took to the streets more than ever, armed not with black-jacks but collecting-boxes, which they rattled under the noses of passers-by. The industrial magnates saw their investment in the National Socialist movement dwindling to infinity; many had already written it off their private ledgers. The Strasser groups' backsliding took away much of the widely advertised unity in the Nazi movement, and many of its most ardent followers grumbled that Hitler should have been content with a small representation in the von Papen and Schleicher Cabinets instead of ruining the party by his insistence upon demands so wholesale. Germany ploughed on through despair, strikes, riots, street fighting, unemployment and a battle royal of the opposing newspapers, to the season of goodwill and peace. How many thousand families starved through that Christmas the world will never know. The municipalities, party organizations, and welfare associations alleviated the suffering as much as finances would allow, but funds were low and the demands were many.

During the few days between Christmas and the New Year political thoughts were relegated to the lumber-room, but fear of what the New Year would bring haunted the minds of most.

Week after week Göring was in conference with the President of the Reich. Suggestion after suggestion was made by him in an attempt to put an end to the uncertainty and to bring his party to power.

Early in January in 1933 von Papen, remembering the Hitler to whom he had made promises in June, and smarting under the slighting by von Schleicher, thought that he saw a way of using the Nazi movement to place himself in the saddle again. So he consorted with Hugenberg to bring about the resumption of friendly relationship between the Nazis and the Nationalists of which the Harzburger Front had been a sorry vehicle. If Hitler could only be made Chancellor he would thus become muzzled and a prisoner of the capitalist system, for both Hitler and Göring had on several occasions intimated that the Chancellorship and one or two ministerial appointments would satisfy the National Socialist movement. Von Papen, a friend of Hindenburg's, told the Field-Marshal of the scheme, and, with the President's approval, a meeting was arranged at Baron von Schröder's house, between himself, Hitler, and other interested parties, having as its outcome the suggestion for a creation of a united front of all the Nationalist elements, led by Adolf Hitler, as Chancellor. The threat of Communism had been used as a lever to induce this sudden unanimity. With all the other parties unable to form and maintain a Government it seemed the only logical way out. The Nazis could not have weathered another election, the Nationalists alone were incapable of holding together, the Social Democrats had lost their spirit, and the Communist vote had increased in the November elections. Great emphasis was laid on the latter. Von Papen was a wily bird, but he had reckoned without the determination of Göring, as the conduct of affairs in Prussia will show. Göring might not have been the born politician, but he was a born fighter—his whole life had been a fight, and a little matter of the wish of a Nationalist politician, who was unable to hold down the Chancellorship, was a mere bagatelle.

Consequent upon this meeting, the Hitler Press and

the Hugenberg Press hurled their denunciations at the Government. There was much heart-burning in the party headquarters, in the Wilhelmstrasse, and among the Reichstag deputies of all hues.

The whole of the non-Nazi Press sang the praise of the renegade Strasser, who had just issued a manifesto of his intention of joining the Government as Vice-Chancellor and a list of candidates for his own new party for the next elections. Many of the names were those of still active members in the Nazi party, and a purge directed by Göring cleared the camp of the doubters. Göring had by now become more ruthless than ever. He, more than any other Nazi leader, saw that if the movement was to carry on, only the most stringent action would suffice. Hitler's policy in the past had been rather to let the disaffected members commit themselves, red-handed, in a proven attack on the movement, but Göring's method was to nip in the bud any danger that threatened.

The results of the Lippe State elections proved that the Nazis were recovering ground; the poll disclosed an increase of 20 per cent, which instilled fresh spirit into the whole movement throughout the Reich, and, with the defeatist section rooted out, the new slogan became: 'To power without compromise.' This turn in events gave a fillip to the negotiations with von Papen; Hugenberg pressed for an immediate move to put the new National Front into operation, and Göring threatened 'to break the neck of every follower of Strasser left in the Nazis.'

During the last week in January the S.A. mobilized for a tremendous demonstration march through Berlin. Whereupon the whole populace had a fit of the shivers and the police called out the reserves, patrolling the districts of Wedding and Neukölln with armoured cars. The demonstration was to be held in the Bülow Platz (since renamed Horst Wessel Platz), and, as the day wore by, it became evident that the Nazis had become masters

of the streets—with the Communist 'Iron Front,' despite all their brave noise about trouncing 'the brown beasts,' looking on—impotent. Two years before, a Nazi S.A. man had been killed by Communists, and at all the meetings held on this particular day of demonstration, 24 January, appeals to his memory and his sacrifice for the party, and for Germany, became the leitmotiv of the symphony of hate levelled against the Communists and the 'System' by the speakers throughout Berlin.

Every available supporter to a Hitler Chancellorship was being beaten up by the agents of the new front. Schacht, addressing the Steel Syndicate, damned the Schleicher regime because of its agrarian Bolshevism, and warned his listeners that if the Government was allowed to proceed with its policy of land settlement the control of industry would come next in the programme. Whereupon, very sensibly, the steel magnates took out their cheque-books and the new National Front benefited accordingly. Schacht told the meeting, in passing, that this man, Hitler, 'was the only man in politics to-day who could save German economy.' The Association of German Industry joined in the attack, and Hitler, from a waning star in December 1932, became a new, rapidly approaching comet in January 1933. Events were just playing into his hands, ably assisted by the knowledge, which had circulated like the native telegraphy of Central Africa, that the *rapprochement* between the Nazis and the Nationalists had been brought about in the house of a great banker and Stock Exchange king. This lulled capital into a state of security—they thought that the anti-Jewish programme of the N.S.D.A.P. had been dispensed with.

From all points of the compass the supporters of Hitler rallied to Berlin. The Kaiserhof Hotel became the positive pole in a political electric State, having as its negative the Chancellory opposite. The Duke of Coburg

came hurrying back from a visit to England. He visited von Hindenburg and then Hitler. All this was causing the greatest perturbation to the Chancellor, and he called upon the Reichswehr Ministry to be prepared. The Reichsbanner,¹ by now quite a powerful military auxiliary movement, composed in the main of old soldiers pledged to preserve the Republic, was approached by Schleicher and asked point-blank if it would stand side by side with the army and the trade unions if the Government declared martial law on Hitler and Hugenberg; which meant the Sturm Abteilungen and Stahlhelm against the Reichswehr and Reichsbanner. Civil war—and planned by the military head of a Republican Government.

Carl Höltermann, the head of the Reichsbanner, replied to the effect that if the executive of his organization could be assured that the suggestion was meant in earnest, and that the Chancellor could guarantee that the whole Reichswehr would march even against Hindenburg and the Constitution, then by all means certainly.

The last few days of January were hectic ones indeed. Göring's car could be seen before the President's Palace, then before his flat in Kaiserdamm, again tearing through the Wilhelmstrasse to the Kaiserhof, then on to the offices and homes of Hugenberg, Schacht, and von Papen. Yet few in Berlin sensed what was toward.

Hindenburg was furious with Schleicher's inability to

¹ Towards the close of 1932 the organization of the Reichsbanner was extremely efficient. The League of German Trade Unions had given full approval to over 1,000,000 of its members to enrol as militant members of this republican Storm Guard, and independent observers at the time were inclined to assess the number of its storm troops at any figure between 150,000 and 250,000 men. Realizing that the Nazis, in the event of a 'Putsch' on a grand scale, would seize the public utility undertakings, the Reichsbanner had organized a *Not Abteilung* (Emergency Technical Division) from among technical workers to counteract such a manœuvre. Altogether, if this body had been possessed of real leadership, or rather fanatical leadership, and the *élan* of the Nazis, it would have represented a severe opposition to the progress of National socialism. As it was, in the crucial moment, it became atrophied and failed to function.

control the Reichstag's curiosity over the administration of the Eastern Relief Fund, and, in a stormy interview, on 28 January, between the two soldiers, the senior, in military and political rank, dismissed his third Chancellor in six months.

Between 28 and 29 January von Schleicher had conspired with certain general officers of the Reichswehr and the Catholic (or Christian) and Socialist Trade Unions to bring about a *coup de main* on the 30th. The trade unions were to call a general strike, supported by the Potsdam garrison, which would march into Berlin. A state of siege would be declared, von Papen and Hitler were to be placed under preventive arrest, the President (and sovereign head of the Republic's armed forces) was to be faced with the situation as he would then find it, and the conspirators would plead interest of State.

By Sunday the 29th the plan was known to Göring; it was also known to Hindenburg, who decided to call Hitler to the Chancellorship along the lines suggested by von Papen. This was Göring's hour. The thing he had striven for unceasingly for many long years had come about. He was able to go to the Kaiserhof and officially inform his party chief that to-morrow, 30 January, he would be sworn in by Field-Marshal von Hindenburg as Chancellor of the German Reich.

The hour had indeed struck—the same hour of which he had warned his war-time comrades in the Stiftskeller, in Aschaffenburg, nearly fifteen years before.

Captain Hermann Göring—last commander of the Richthofen squadron—now President of the German Reichstag, had just entered upon his fortieth year—an age at which he would have been retiring from a captaincy in the 112th Infantry Regiment on grounds of age limit but for some hot blood and reckless shooting in Sarajevo on a hot July day nineteen years before.

The wheel of German history was again about to turn.

PHASE THREE

THE CROOKED CROSS

1933—

GERMANY and the world heard, by wireless, that Adolf Hitler had been entrusted by Field-Marshal von Hindenburg with office as Chancellor of the German Republic, with power to form a Cabinet of national concentration.

The crowd of waiting Berliners in the Wilhelmstrasse heard it from Göring direct, who, as excited as a school-boy, rushed out of the Presidential Palace and cried to them all: "The leader has become Chancellor." Hitler's appointment, in the light of all the contradictory statements issued by the Government and the President's bureau, during January, came as a surprise to the German people and, possibly, as a greater surprise to the rank and file of the National Socialist movement.

Hitler immediately announced the composition of his Cabinet and, to the surprise of all, only two Nazis were in the list—Göring and Frick. Dr. Wilhelm Frick, as the Minister of the Interior, and Hermann Göring, as Reichs Minister without portfolio, Commissioner for Air and provisional Minister of the Interior for Prussia. But that was enough; Göring was, in any case, a member of the Reichs Cabinet, and his appointment in Prussia made him dictator of the central State in the Reich. With Prussia cleared of opposition, the rest of the Reich would prove humble enough. Nevertheless, the rank and file looked with trepidation at the overwhelming number of

Nationalist office-bearers in Hitler's first Cabinet. At first blush it looked as if he had become ensnared in the very conditions against which he had protested for twelve months—himself a prisoner of his Junker and industrialist Ministers. There was von Papen, as Vice-Chancellor, with the ear of the President ; Hugenberg, with his newspapers and cinemas to make or break the Nazis ; von Blomberg, pro-Nazi it was true, but a Junker nevertheless ; Franz Seldte, the leader of the Stahlhelm, together with several Ministers left over from the Schleicher regime.

The non-Nazi portion of the German Republic, reviewing the constitution of the Hitler Cabinet, breathed freely, and the Socialist and Jewish Press, in a weak moment, let loose a spate of satire and insolence on the new Master, thereby thinking that his discomfiture would please and assist the Nationalists. Not so. Paper after paper was suppressed or banned indefinitely.

The Nazi population filled the streets, and by their very solid brown mass brought fear to the mind of the average man.

For many years now the German citizen had become accustomed to the cry : ' Germany awake ! Judah perish.' He had read in his newspapers that Hitler had told the Supreme Court at Leipzig : ' There will come a time when our ideas can no longer be kept secret from the world. Out of forty million Germans of voting age thirty-five millions will be behind us, and they will know what they want and what we can give them. After our victory . . . heads will roll.' The citizen remembered, also, that Hermann Göring had promised that ' Jews will hang as soon as we are in power.' It was all very bewildering and many wondered if these catch-phrases were merely political metaphor or a prediction of actual fact. Rumours ran like wildfire through the cities of Germany that a St. Bartholomew's eve for German Jewry was being

considered. For years a tirade of hate against the Jew had swept the country. 'Every National Socialist is an anti-Semite, but not every anti-Semite is a National Socialist,' ran one slogan, while another said that 'anti-Semitism is to a certain extent the sentimental foundation of our movement.' With this intense propaganda the average Nazi was naturally to expect that the 600,000 Jews in Germany were to be exterminated. Much loose talk among the rank and file in the movement led foreign observers, particularly, to believe that much of which the party literature boasted would be fulfilled.

The Nazis came to power, but the bloody pogrom did not become the order of the day. Instead, an order issued from the Brown House: 'There are to be no individual pogroms. We will kill the Jew systematically—where he can feel it most—in his economic life.' Disappointed that the 'internal enemy' of Germany's economy was not to be handed over for popular punishment, the S.A. men, accustomed to an iron discipline, obeyed the new order, but the more disorderly elements in the party, drunk with the arrival of 'their' revolution, broke over the traces and looted Jewish shops, manhandling Jewish persons. The ire of the Brown Shirts was directed more towards the Communists than the Jews, and the streets of the big cities for a few days experienced more bloodshed than ever before.

Overnight staunch Republicans joined the Nazi party more out of fear than of conversion, and where, hitherto, Hans, the German workman, was wont to cry: 'Red Front,' he now took great pleasure in being the loudest with his 'Heil Hitler.' Such is human clay and the fickle electorate.

Many of the incidents and much of the disorder occurring in Germany during the early days of the Nazi revolution were the natural concomitants of a temporary transitional period. Hysteria swayed the masses and,

behind the cloak of a national revolution, many satisfied personal feuds of long standing. Some petty Nazi official had suffered at the hands of a Jewish or even Aryan landlord or had lost a lawsuit to another, and, nursing his imaginary grievance, allowed his slumbering personal hate to burst into flame, wrecking his will upon the poor unfortunate behind the cover of the brown shirt. Not only Jews received treatment of this sort. The method found itself useful in dealing with Aryan rivals also.

Bewildered by all the conflicting reports coming out of Germany, the world looked on and wondered if this great nation would survive or if it would destroy itself completely. It doubted the ability of Hitler and his Ministers, unskilled in the management of a great political machine, to achieve the unity promised by the President in his speech after his appointment of Hitler. The world also knew—what was known to Hitler and his two fellow-Nazis, Göring and Frick—that the Nationalists would prove difficult bedmates. The world did not know, however, that for twenty-four hours the Hitler administration had sat over a veritable store of gunpowder. The recalcitrant Schleicher and his Potsdam garrison, aided by the Reichsbanner and Trade Unions, were still factors in German affairs. The flooding of Berlin with hordes of S.A. men and Stahlhelm, the dissolution of the Reichstag and the declaration by Hindenburg that he invoked Article 48 of the Constitution in favour of Hermann Göring, as Reichs Commissioner for Prussia, came as a wet shower to the ardours of the counter-revolutionaries, who, in face of events, could not pursue their original intentions. Göring was Dictator of Prussia, with 100,000 trained police behind him. These police were as good as soldiers, and were, as to 80 per cent, Nazi in sympathy. The strong-arm method had won again, but the brain behind the arm was as sharp as the limb was powerful.

This declaration of a state of emergency caused a flutter in the Southern German States, who feared an attack upon their autonomy. Bavaria, more particularly, talked loosely again of the Wittelsbach Dynasty, and monarchical movements raised their slumbering heads.

With the dissolution of the Reichstag, not only the deputies, but the whole German race, seemed to have gone on a long vacation. There began the era, which the writer has described in an earlier work on this period, of 'flags and festivals.' For ever marching, singing, shouting, drinking, and acclaiming this new Germany, the people became intoxicated with the greatness of themselves. Each city and village remained *en fête* for weeks, buntings blowing in the breeze, the Swastika ubiquitously predominating. From nowhere sprang Nazi bands, ready at a moment's notice to beguile the tedious hours with the martial music the German loves so well. The very voluptuousness of the people's joy became embarrassing; overnight the whole of Germany appeared to have turned to Hitler as its god. The opposition went to ground and has remained there ever since, to break out in occasional pamphleteering campaigns and ghostly radio prowls, crying: 'Freiheit.' If the German people wanted freedom in 1933, then those so-called intellectuals, strong men of the trade unions and avowed disciples of Bebel, the great Social Democrat, who were representatives of the German nation, cowardly betrayed them. In their hands was the weapon, the most powerful weapon in modern history, the child of Socialism itself—the general strike. They did not use it because, as one prominent Social Democrat deputy told the writer, 'Hitler had, through the President, received power quite legally and acted, by virtue of the decree placed in his hands, legally. If Hitler broke the Constitution later in his administration, then measures would have to be taken.' All of which seemed to be like a part of a con-

versation out of *Alice in Wonderland*. Talking quite bluntly, these people whom the Nazis had pushed out of office knew that they had shot their bolt, and they made way for the new Master; they had used up all their patent quackeries on the credulous masses, and had no further remedies. The Nazis said they had a good, new, unfailing cure, and because the masses had not bought from their stall before they tried the prescription, the after-effect of which time alone will show, for fifty years is but a page in the history book.

.

Upon entering the first Nazi Cabinet, Göring retained his post as President of the Reichstag, so that he was the voice of the Reichstag in the Cabinet counsels. Owing to events which were to follow swiftly upon the heels of the new order, this office became a sinecure. At the first Cabinet meeting he tabled a resolution, in his capacity as Commissioner for Air, that the German civil airways should be expanded and that Germany should press forward with schemes for rearming in the air. At this meeting, also, he received a free hand, through the presidential mandate, to 'purge' Prussia.

In 1933, while there was a Nazi regime in the Reich, owing to the complication of individual Governments, there was still a *de jure* Social Democrat Government in Prussia espousing Marxist tendencies, although *de facto* it had no power at all, for von Papen, in his famous 'rape' of Prussia in the July previously, had deposed the Government headed by Braun, a Socialist, but on nodding terms with Hindenburg, and Braun had just gone on holiday, refusing to recognize von Papen's authority. The Prussian Ministry of the Interior was the most powerful in Prussia, because it controlled the police. Göring's first task was to 'purge' the criminal and political police, and in so doing he removed twenty-two out of

thirty-two divisional police chiefs and literally hundreds of superintendents and thousands of sergeants! This left Prussia temporarily under-officered. In the main, those who had been dismissed were anti-Nazi in their outlook. Those who came in to take their places were tried hands in the S.A. and S.S. and the Stahlhelm. A new oath was administered to the whole of the police—to the National Socialist State and the Third Reich. Under the old regime the police officers of Prussia had carried rubber truncheons, and these Göring withdrew from service and issued in their stead—revolvers. He argued that it was unmanly to belabour a breaker of the peace with a truncheon. He foresaw that a good deal of clearing up would have to be done by his police, and he knew that there were plenty of die-hards among the Communists who would not give in so easily as their political leaders had done. He also knew, from the experiences gained by his S.A., that many were armed. So his police had to be armed against the possibility of meeting force. The emergency decree granted by Hindenburg, to put a stop to lawlessness in Prussia, was used by Göring to the full. He has never jibbed at half-measures.

‘In applying the regulations the motives and aims of the offenders are to be taken into account as much as possible. The decree is not designed to impede the popular elements who are behind the Government of national concentration in their welcome work of co-operation in promoting the higher aims of the Reichs Government.’

Events were now leading on to election day, which was fixed for 5 March. Trouble was everywhere. The Nazis did not assume control of the Reich quite so easily as has been commonly supposed. The State Governments were by no means tractable, and the Left parties were not dead. They held their meetings, under difficult conditions it is true, but their voices were heard. Whereupon, giving measure for measure, Göring’s decree was extended to

prohibit Communist gatherings. His police had strict orders to enforce this. Official after official was removed from office, and the whole administration of Prussia became filled with stalwarts of the National Socialist movement who could be really trusted. Germany was, in truth, experiencing her Cromwellian era.

A month of the alliance between the Nazis and the Nationalists proved enough for both sides. Von Papen, Seldte, and Hugenberg formed a 'Black, White, and Red' fighting front from among their followers to ensure the safety of their election meetings. Meeting after meeting was broken up by uniformed S.A. men, and Göring looked on without lifting a finger. If these people chose to demonstrate in their own way, in opposition to his decree, so much the worse for them. . . . His police were not for their protection when they were 'mining' the Nazi citadel. The increasing opposition of the new Prussian regime was felt sharply. Hard knocks were given and taken. Finally, Göring published his famous manifesto which caused such a stir in England and America :

'I do not think it necessary to point out that the police must, in all circumstances, avoid even the appearance of a hostile attitude towards, or even the impression of any persecution of, the national associations and parties. I expect rather from all the police authorities that they will create and maintain the best understanding with the above-mentioned organizations, in the ranks of which the most important forces of political reconstruction are to be found. Moreover, every kind of activity for national purposes and national propaganda is to be thoroughly supported. On the other hand, the activities of organizations hostile to the State are to be checked by the strongest measures. With Communist terrorism and raids there must be no trifling, and, when necessary, revolvers must be used without regard to consequences. Police officers who fire their revolvers in the execution of their duty will be protected by me without regard to the consequences of using their weapons. But officers who fail, out of mistaken regard for consequences, must expect disciplinary action to be

taken against them. The protection of the national populace, who are continually cramped in their activities, demands the strictest application of the legal regulations governing prohibited demonstrations, prohibited meetings, plunderings, incitements to high treason, mass strikes, revolts, Press offences, and all other punishable offences of the disturbers of law and order. No officer should lose sight of the fact that failure to adopt a measure is more heinous than the making of mistakes in its application. I hope and expect that all officers will feel at one with me in our common purpose of saving our Fatherland from threatened calamity by the strengthening and consolidation of all our national forces.'

Upon the publication of this manifesto the world cried out that Göring, a German statesman, was a murderer and an inciter to murder ; to which he replied, at a large mass meeting in Dortmund :

'In the future there will be only one man who will wield power and bear responsibility in Prussia—that is myself. Whoever does his duty in the service of the State, who obeys my orders and ruthlessly makes use of his revolver when attacked, is assured of my protection. Whoever, on the other hand, plays the coward, will have to reckon on being thrown out by me at the earliest possible moment. A bullet fired from the barrel of a police pistol is my bullet. If you say that is murder then I am the murderer.' And he wound up : 'People are prattling about¹ two sorts of law, aye, I know two sorts of law because I know two sorts of men : those who are with us and those who are against us.'

Brutal, but to the point. What politician of a democracy would dare to take such a stand ? Göring has been called by every term of opprobrium known in international vocabularies, but he is no coward. He has never yet hid behind the skirts of a parliamentary order nor has he passed on the blame to lower down.

A few days before the polling day the Reichstag mysteriously caught fire, arising out of which Göring immedi-

¹ Referring to the obvious ambiguity in the wording of his manifesto.

ately suppressed the whole of the Communist and Socialist Press and arrested the entire executive of the Communist party.

The Reichstag fire was the signal for wholesale arrests of doubtful persons. More than 5000 Communists were lodged in prison, and when that accommodation ran out, special prison camps, now familiarly known as concentration camps, sprang up in key positions, in Germany, in which the prisoners were incarcerated.

By now Göring had completely organized the Secret Police, commonly known as the GESTAPO (*Geheime Staats Polizei*). This organization in a very short while had reached the pitch of efficiency. Its founder himself has said of it that, by a network of centres in the provinces reporting to Berlin, he is kept hourly informed of everything which happens in the State. He knows the passwords of the opposition, every letter they write, every telephone-call they make and receive, and, however often they change the names of their couriers, they are known, tracked down, and arrested. This is no mean boast. The Gestapo is the most dreaded and efficient police organization in the world. And in the earlier days of the Third Reich it was only through the untiring labours of this service that authority was maintained without too great a show of force.

During these difficult early days of Nazi rule, or at least the period leading up to the March elections, close investigation will disclose, and history will record, that while Hitler may have been the spirit of the German revolution it was Göring, of the iron hand, who was the real German hero. His fearlessness, his brutality, his complete disregard for institutions and constitutions, his rough humour, and his awful blind rage and clamour for revenge against the 'November' criminals and upholders of the 'System,' had made him the flail of wrath. All legal guarantees he abolished, and arbitrary acts, such

as searches, arrests, confiscation, and lodgment in jail, removed all opposition to the end to be achieved.

On 4 March, the eve of the poll, concentrations of S.A., S.S., and Stahlhelm had been made in and around Berlin. March and counter-march of solid masses of brown, black, and field grey entertained the people. They saw the might of the Third Reich, and the day was also chosen as 'The day of the National Awakening.' It was the day for the final speeches to the electorate, and Göring, speaking from Frankfort-on-Main, declared: 'My measures are not to be vitiated by legal considerations. You must all become accustomed to the idea that I am not in office to dispense justice, but to destroy and exterminate.' And so, with these words singing in his ears, the German citizen went to the polling booth. Those who intended to vote for the Nazis and Nationalists were safe; those Communists and Socialists who hoped to use the political expedient of the vote, hoping against hope that they could turn the Brown Shirts out after having let them in, were in danger of destruction.

The results of the elections were announced, and beacon blazed to beacon across the hill-tops of Germany. The streets resounded to the tramp of marching men and the wild cries of the people. It was as if some great battle had been won or some great peace signed. Everyone was out in the streets, and, despite the jubilation shown by the Nazi partisans, heads still continued to be broken. The Nazis had won and, with the addition of the National vote, if one cares still to consider that the Harzburger Front remained intact, won handsomely.

National Socialists	.	.	17,300,000
Nationalists	.	.	3,100,000
Communists	.	.	4,900,000
Social Democrats.	.	.	7,200,000

These figures gave the Hitler-Hugenberg coalition 340

seats in the Reichstag out of a total of 647—an absolute majority.

The National Socialists, now in power by the legitimate vote of the people, began to consolidate their governmental positions. Commissioners were appointed in every State, and the Swastika banner of the Nazis became, by presidential decree, flying side by side with the old Imperial colours, the standard of the Third Reich, connecting, as the decree said, 'the glorious past with the vigorous rebirth of the German Nation.'

The new Reichstag was ordained to meet in the Garrison Church at Potsdam on 21 March, and it was a psychological gesture to the world that the new Germany had arisen. The pomp of almost forgotten military splendour, and the shade of Frederick the Great, was to present a background to the new Government of national concentration, which, according to the polling booth, had the will of the German people solidly behind it.

In the meantime, though, very hasty measures were put into operation to quell, finally, all opposition. The Reichsbanner headquarters at Magdeburg were smashed up, and wholesale arrests made. Those who, in any manner whatever, were suspected of being against the Government were watched closely or haled off to concentration camps. Others were intimidated into silence, if not acquiescence, until, by the time the Potsdam day came, there appeared to be complete unanimity. The attitude toward the Jew took on a serious turn and many complaints came pouring into Government offices from Germans and from influential circles abroad, in which mild remonstrance mingled with bitter recrimination. Göring, never one to sit down under reproach or attack, answered these protests in his own inimitable manner :

'As far as we are concerned, the Nation is divided into two parts : those who belong to National Socialism, and those who oppose us. I am not impartial and I don't propose to be ; on

192 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

the contrary, I intend to be partial. I stand by National Socialism and I fight everything else. Surely, it is only 'natural' that we should ask the people not to buy from Jews any longer, but from Germans. I will send my police wherever German interests require protection, but the police are not maintained to defend Jews. The German Nation is awakened at last.

'We are reproached with having prohibited many newspapers. The only thing that surprises me is that a few hostile sheets are still allowed to appear in the country. I should be neglecting my responsibilities if I did not stop the spread of this poison among the German people. It is quite possible that we have made mistakes in this connection, but at all events we have acted. I am in the habit of shooting from time to time; and if sometimes I shoot beyond the mark, I have at least shot!'

From now on it was Hermann Göring who, after Hitler, enjoyed the limelight of the German scene. He appeared, to those who watched him, to be possessed of a tremendous capacity for work. He wore out all those who worked in his Ministries and moved about the Reich like mercury. Wherever trouble was brewing, there he was to be found, armed with the authority to stamp it out. The South German States bowed before his wishes and readily agreed to the National Socialist Commissioner, General von Epp, taking office in Bavaria. This was indeed a diplomatic move, for von Epp was on good terms with the Wittelbach prince and with the Bavarian people. In him the hopes and wishes of all sections were united, so the fear of a Bavarian secession had again disappeared.

A peculiar monkishness had pervaded Göring's life since the death of his wife and, in complete contradiction to the general make-up of the man's character, although the German State allowed him an official residence, as President of the Reichstag—a veritable palace—he continued to live in quite a medium-sized flat in Kaiserdamm, simply but well furnished.

This flat served as living accommodation and personal

office. The only sign to distinguish it from the flat of an ordinary lawyer or doctor was the presence of a Prussian policeman and an S.S. man on guard at the main entrance. From hour to hour one incessant stream of messengers, usually S.S. men, booted and spurred, poured in and out of the flat from the various Ministries and party offices. Power had come to them when least expected. A few weeks before the outlook of the National Socialists was bleak indeed, with every member suspecting the other of being engaged in some intrigue or counter-intrigue; and now these strapping young men were carrying messages to and from their old party leaders, who were now Ministers of the German Reich. The thing for which they had battled, politically and physically, for many long years had come about. But to them it was all so strange, as they stalked up the stairs with their very new dispatch-cases under their arms, and addressed their old chief of the S.A. as Herr Reichsminister. Some were like boys promoted to prefect going to talk to the Head; others were insufferably insolent to the smaller fry of the civilians. All were extremely courteous to foreigners, and were at great pains to explain the new revolution, the greatness of Hitler, and the comradeship of Göring. Without exception, according to their rank, they gathered in the bars of the first-class hotels or the more simple beer or wine restaurants and talked, talked, talked of the dawning Golden Age.

When the main hall of the Kaiserdamm flat was filled with waiting visitors, many of these S.S. men overflowed into a side room, decorated in an amazement of soft blue-greens and gold, carpets and window draperies toning in to match. Once in this room voices became lowered almost to a whisper. A cathedral-like atmosphere pervaded the room. It was restful, a sharp contrast to the bustle beyond the doors. To talk even seemed sacrilege. A room of greater refinement in decoration and general

atmosphere would be difficult to find in any building inside or outside of Germany. On first entry it became difficult to find a word which fittingly described this room. Then in a flash it came. It was a shrine.

On one wall of the room, facing the broad, long Continental windows, was hung an oil painting of a beautiful but intensely sad woman, seated on a green slope decked with mountain flowers, snow-capped peaks in the distance, with her hands clasped in her lap, looking steadfastly but troubled out of the frame into the room. It was one of those portraits the glance of which follows one searchingly whatever position one adopts before it. It was Carin Göring, painted from an intimate little snapshot taken in the days of poverty in Bayrischzell many long years before. Before the painting was set a simply carved table, on which stood a bowl of wild flowers, flanked by a pair of heavy brass candlesticks of Gothic workmanship. The shrine had its altar, and every visitor felt a trespasser on the privacy of a communion of souls. In this room, each day, Hermann Göring snatched a few moments from his overcrowded life to reflect on the past and to remind himself of his dual oath, the one to his fellow-comrades in the cold winter's night in 1918 and the other to his wife. Her last wish was that he should carry on his work in which she had been so great a helpmate and to continue as the true Paladin of Hitler. Words come easily enough to describe most things that one sees and feels every day, but words are impossible to find that will describe adequately the paradox of Hermann Göring, the anti-Democrat and Jew-hater, and Hermann Göring the man, who could be controlled by a woman's word, who finds pleasure and happiness in the company of children and who would burst into a furious rage upon hearing that an animal had been wilfully hurt.

.

One by one the men of the Nationalists, with whom Göring had been treating diplomatically for over two years, many of whom had argued and stormed in his house while his wife intervened with coffee and a cheerful word about painting, the opera, or poetry, were convinced of his sincerity to the National Socialist and German cause and were won over. Day by day office came to these men, and, on 20 March, Dr. Hjalmar Schacht, one-time president of the Reichsbank under a Socialist regime, again took over that office and threw in his lot, for good or bad, with the Nazi chieftains.

While these accretions to the Nazi strength have since, in most cases, proved to have assisted materially in the rebuilding of Germany, the worst elements in the party were already negotiating to sell Hitler, Göring, and Goebbels to a grey, shadowy, as yet formless, something, behind which were certain spirits of the War Ministry. For months before 30 January Ernst Roehm, the homosexual chief of staff of the S.A. ; Karl Ernst, one of the leaders of the Berlin S.A., and intimate of Roehm ; Edmund Heines, police president of Breslau, Reichstag deputy and terrorist of the lowest type, had been bargaining with a section of the Bendlerstrasse¹ to bring the S.A. over as cover for a Reichswehr 'Putsch.' These men were thoroughly reprehensible and should have met their end at the hands of official State executioners long before their sudden destruction in June 1934. Their murderous deeds and disgusting conduct would fill a novel ; they obtruded their noisome persons at every decent gathering. Foreign diplomats were placed in the delicate position of having to suffer them at their own houses and at official parties given to members of the Government of the Third Reich. Their loathsome practices were stamped on their faces and in their bearing. Practices of which one cannot write in any civilized

¹ War Office District.

196 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY.

language, unless it be in the terminology of the pathology of sexual neurosis, grew up among the youthful members of the S.A., under these men's able tuition, until the scandal became so great that parents took it upon themselves to approach the Ministers, and even the Chancellor's personal entourage, with a view to bringing about a cessation of the conditions under which their sons were forced to live. Was this the new greater Germany—the place of men among men? Was the conduct of life to be measured by the attitude of this idea? Were nigger dance bands to be prohibited in the cabarets, only for the pollution of the race to be carried out by the alleged torch-bearers of the Nordic spirit? If so, then away with the Nordic myth and let the German youth go to its hell in a normal manly way.

These things were simmering on the eve of the great ceremony at Potsdam, when the venerable President Hindenburg was to announce to the world Germany's revolution and solidarity.

These first few months were difficult ones and Göring knew well the forces he was combating when he strove so hard and so successfully to give himself the support of his all-powerful secret police, to whom no man's actions were secret. As days wore by, his cynical smile became more pronounced. He knew what was afoot, but his authority was not yet strong enough. He could wait, as he had waited before, but in the waiting period he worked also.

And so, on that momentous 21 March 1933, Adolf Hitler and his Ministers received the public approval of the President before the Reichstag deputies, foreign Press, and diplomats assembled in the Church of Frederick the Great in Potsdam. Hindenburg, the twentieth-century Wotan, handed over the reins of the Reich to the representative of an order of which he had but the vaguest notions. The wreath he laid that day on

the tomb of the soldier-king was considered by many, at the time, as being a wreath on the grave of Prussian Junkerdom. Time will tell. The Nazis believed that the shadow of the Hohenzollern had disappeared with the installation of their leader as Chancellor. The Leftist section hailed the arrival, at last, of the long-awaited *Volksgemeinschaft* (Union of the People), and swore to the destruction of tradition and birthright. But the real leaders of the new Germany thought otherwise, as their speeches and actions prove. The great historic past was conjured up to lend spirit to the new awakening. The greatness of the past was waved before the eyes of 70,000,000 people, to encourage and sustain their support for a mighty strengthening of the armed forces and for an expansion into all the German-speaking countries.

Hindenburg reminded the gathering that the election results of 5 March proved conclusively that the nation had placed itself solidly behind the Chancellor of his choice, thus giving him constitutional foundation for his work: he called to the nation to stand behind the Government and to do everything possible to further its work. The very spot on which they stood, he reminded the assembly, brought to mind a retrospective view of the old Prussia, the spirit of which, should inspire the present generation.

An appropriate speech in a fit setting. The desired effect had been achieved and the minds of all decent Germans turned to a contemplation of their country's greatness. From then onwards even the neutral elements in the great German population turned to support the new regime, for it promised much. But the Left of the National Socialists pursued their own course, ineffectually and ultimately, to its own destruction. Academic Socialism had disappeared in Germany or would sleep for at least a decade, according to how the Third Reich prospered under Adolf Hitler.

198 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

On 24 March the Enabling Act was passed in the Reichstag and sanctioned by the President. This placed supreme power in the hands of the Hitler Cabinet to rule the Reich for four years, unfettered by reference to Parliament. Unrestricted right to promulgate laws of the most drastic type, even to effectuate a change in the Constitution, was granted in this Act. The right of veto of the Reichsrat was dispensed with, and Hitler had more power than ever. The Reichstag, Reichsrat,¹ and Weimar constitution now no longer existed and the Cabinet proceeded to rule with a rubber stamp. This last meeting of a duly elected Reichstag, in which all parties were represented, sealed the doom of democratic Germany and heralded the entrance of the Third Empire. At this meeting, once the Act was passed, the immunity from arrest within the Reichstag of a deputy disappeared, and, here and then, a member of the Cabinet, Günther Gereke, was arrested on the order of Göring on a charge of embezzlement of State funds. Throughout the country wholesale arrests of a similar nature took place, but the more pretentious embezzlers and systematic robbers of German public funds were, by that time, safe within the hospitable walls of England, Switzerland, and France with the stolen marks long since converted into more stable currency. They were 'refugees,' living in fine houses, owning luxurious motor cars, and making themselves as thoroughly disliked in their country of adoption as they had been in the country of their birth. These arrests were, more often than not, accompanied by acts of physical violence, and, in the heat of the time, the innocent doubtless suffered with the guilty. The luckless lesser 'enemies' of the State who remained in Germany bore the brunt of the thwarted designs upon the birds of fine plumage who had flown. Attacks upon Jews increased and world opinion found expression in the

¹ German Upper Chamber, once possessed of the right of veto.

Press of every country. Far from bringing an abatement of the anti-Jewish feeling in Germany, these Press attacks intensified the hatred against the Jew, and ultimately culminated in the official boycott of 1 April. The Catholic Church began to complain of interference with religious doctrines, and within a day or two the Lutheran or Protestant Church added its weight, by issuing a manifesto, stating that it was prepared to defend its rights. Von Papen, a papal chamberlain, stepped bravely into the breach and temporarily pacified the Bishops' Conference, which forthwith issued a manifesto recanting its early denunciation of the Hitler regime. Organized religion, like organized Socialism, in Germany, had lost its fight. The Church of Luther had become spineless, and it was left for a few rebels like Niemöller to defy the Government in isolated districts. The attitude of the German Churches to the Third Reich is one difficult to comprehend. During the fourteen years of the Weimar republic, churches of all denominations were practically empty. Persons sought the evidence of matrimony from the hand of the Registrar in the *Standesamt*,¹ in preference to the priestly blessing; denominational schools were supplanted by the Government institutions which instilled atheism, instead of Scripture, into the minds of the rising generation. Religion, in the view of the State, was as unimportant as it had become in Soviet Russia. Yet, with the advent of Hitler, a Government decree made it known that attendance at their usual denominational places of worship was expected from all in the National Socialist State. The hitherto empty churches rang with the chant of the old German hymns, and in some districts the churches were packed as full as cinemas. Marriage was encouraged in the churches and a frequent sight witnessed in various districts was that of old couples, who had been officially married for perhaps a large

¹ Registry Office of Births, Marriages, and Deaths.

number of years, receiving, late but at last, the blessing of the church upon their union. Hermann Göring gave the lead to this practice in Berlin, at least, by attending weddings as an official witness at the marriage rites of many of his leaders of the S.A. Where Göring led, others were quick to follow. The writer has himself witnessed as many as two hundred weddings of members of the S.A., in one church in a Berlin district, in one mass service conducted by the same priest. This angle on religion of the new Germany presents yet a further paradox of the Third Reich.

The divorce between Hugenberg's Nationalists and the Nazis was soon about to be made absolute. Continually, Hugenberg would run crying to this influential German, and to that general, that he was afraid of the all-consuming appetite of the Nazi machine. He grumbled that the anti-Jewish tactics would be bad for business. He meant, of course, his business, which consisted of exporting his films and receiving advertisements from abroad for insertion in his newspapers. The Nationalist party in the Reichstag began to frown upon the Nazis, and its leader, Ernst Oberfohren, resigned, because of 'the disastrous and suicidal policy' of his party and of Hugenberg in particular in allowing the National Socialist party to run away with it.

To make matters worse for the international prestige of the Government, revolts broke out in the Stahlhelm, which, through its chief, Franz Seldte, had given loyal support to the new regime. Its members, of proved military service, were constantly in conflict with younger men of the S.A. Many striplings of reasonably high rank in the S.A. found themselves, at demonstrations, placed in positions of authority over the ranks of the old soldiers and exercised that authority in a manner extremely objectionable. Words came to blows and squads of Stahlhelm offered physical resistance to companies of

S.A. At Brunswick the movement was prohibited because, in the place of the Nazi salute of the upraised arm, many Stahlhelm members had raised a clenched fist in the Communist salute. Amid all these alarms and excursions into realms of make-belief and comic opera, the real affairs of Government were proceeding at a pace undreamed of. Ordinance followed ordinance, and Hindenburg's time was fully occupied in signing the many hundreds of mandates or blank cheques which the Nazi Cabinet placed before him.

.

The State of Prussia had always been the best governed State in the Reich, in the days of the First Empire, in the days under Wilhelm II, and under the Republican regime. Its Acts of Parliament were models of drafting and its civil service was the envy of the smaller States. Immediately upon receiving his mandate to rule Prussia alone, as emergency commissioner, Hermann Göring abolished the Diet and constituted the Prussian Council of State. This body was advisory only. It could make no decisions and was vested with no authority. It represented a consultative body to which Göring could turn for advice on the suitability of new laws and the condition of the people. Within a month or two of his instalment in office he had completely reorganized Prussia according to the concept of the corporate State. Every officer in each department of the State was known personally to him; his record of service and loyalty to the Nazi movement, and to Göring personally, was filed away in the secret drawers in the Ministry. Dreams were coming true.

The Göring-model Prussia was inspected by the Cabinet and passed, and on 31 March the German people awoke to find that for which Bismarck had striven in vain to achieve had been arranged in a short while by the Hitler

administration—a unification of the Reich. A new word had arrived in the German vocabulary—*Gleichschaltung*. On the last day of March the Government announced the law for the co-ordination and assimilation (*Gleichschaltung*) of the States and provinces. From now on everything in politics was spoken of as being *gleichgeschaltet* (assimilated) by the Reich. This new law gave to every State a similar control and administration as existed in Prussia ; but its autonomy was destroyed. Although the various States retained the normal parliamentary form of government, such assemblies ceased to function in any way other than to put into execution orders issued by the Reichs Government. No local administration could be reprovved by a vote of the Diet, and a change of local Government could only be brought about by the will of the Reichs Government.

For many years the State legislation was often in conflict with the laws of the Reich ; this state of affairs rendered the management of such States particularly costly because they were always in opposition to the Reich, and the undignified sight of State parliaments suing the Reichs Government, and vice versa, in the Supreme Court at Leipzig had been regular occurrences. The States had, in addition to financing their own administration, to contribute to the National Exchequer and, in turn, the Reichs Government gave grants to each State Government. What was a crime in Bavaria was legal in the Palatinate, and what, in Prussia, would have been merely a misdemeanour became punishable as a crime in Thuringia. This new law put an end to governmental muddle and created the uniform State, with a reasonable rationalization of bureaucracy. In the early days of the Third Reich it was an experiment fraught with danger owing to the lack of governmental and municipal experience in the new holders of office. With typical German efficiency, however, the new regime worked

smoothly after a short while, and decree after decree pursued a natural course. A supplementary *Gleichschaltung* law was promulgated within a week or so in which the old Germanic idea of the *Stadtholder*, or *Statthalter*, was reintroduced. These *Statthalter* are viceroys of the sovereign power of the Reich, and their appointment in each State carried the Hitler movement's power to greater heights and rendered opposition more difficult. The powers and duties of these viceroys, or regents, or governors, are wide, subject only to the supreme will of Hitler. Their main function is to appoint and control the work of the State machinery (one can hardly say Government because it lacks the right to take initiative) and generally to 'carry out the will of the Reichs Government.'

One of the first acts of the Hitler Government was to reintroduce the death penalty for capital offences. The sentence was carried out by beheading, but, along with these *Gleichschaltung* decrees, the form the death sentence on political criminals was to take was announced to be hanging. This caused some disturbance, for it appeared to place the political offender, who acted out of conviction, on a plane lower than the common criminal. The Government's answer came sharp and clear. Those who acted against the interests of the State committed an offence against the whole nation; the ordinary criminal or murderer acted out of the conditions in which he was forced to live in society, was actuated by a greed for money, or lust, or, in the case of murder, in hot blood, he was beyond his own control at the time of the perpetration of the deed.

Hermann Göring was immediately appointed *Statthalter* of Prussia and this made him supreme. Ruthlessly he enlarged his plans for the destruction of all those forces which stood for liberality, and more and more political offenders found their way to the concentration

camps throughout Germany, which, incidentally, were guarded by members of his own S.S., from which body had been drawn the nucleus of the Gestapo.

During the whole of March the official attitude to be adopted towards the Jewish community was discussed by the Cabinet. The popular clamour of the rank and file of the Nazi party demanded the head of the Jew on a charger ; Hitler, now in office, was inclined to move more slowly towards the elimination of Jewry from German national life ; Hugenberg was against any action ; but Göring's policy, in which Goebbels supported him wholeheartedly, for a change, was for a complete cleavage. The Jew was to have no place in German economy. Finally, the whole Cabinet agreed that direct action against the Jew should not be undertaken by the Government at all, but that the problem should be handled by a specially constituted committee directed by Julius Streicher and that the S.A. should execute the orders of this 'Organization Committee.' The Press received a proclamation calling upon the nation to boycott the Jews, and by the morning of 1 April 1933 30,000 S.A. men, in Berlin alone, paraded ready for picketing all Jewish shops and offices in the capital. The whole Reich was reminded of the fact that Jews were behind organized Communism and that international Socialism was fathered by Marx—himself a Jew. Hitler had said : ' If the Jew wins over the world with the help of Marxian doctrines, then their crown will be the wreath of death for mankind. So I believe in the spirit of the Almighty Creator—I shall defend myself against the Jew, I shall fight for the work of the Lord ! ' So, with this as a light to guide them, the Nazi platoons marched through streets, bearing banners, calling upon all Germans to avenge themselves on Israel. Lorries rolled through the streets loaded with shouting Brown-shirts waving anti-Jewish placards. Yellow badges had been pasted overnight on Jewish windows and the

doors of Jewish professional men. All bore the same legend: 'Germans beware! Do not buy from Jews.'

These badges were the source of much trouble from genuine Aryan persons with names similar to Jews. For instance, the old Germanic name 'Meier' means dairyman—this had become modernized into Meyer, in some cases. Now it is notorious that German Jews have names originally not their own, so that a Jew bearing the name Meyer must not be confused with the Jewish Christian name, or perhaps it would be proper to say forename, of Mayer. German-Jewish names, such as Loewenstein, Rosenbaum, and Veilchenthal, meaning respectively, Lion stone, Rose tree, and Violet valley, are relics from the time of Frederick the Great, himself a hammer of the Jews. When he required money for his wars he decreed that rich Jews should pay for the privilege of exchanging their Hebraic names for German ones more euphuistic. Consequently, many Aryans bearing names to which they had a right and which had, through the years, by their adoption by the Jews, come to be regarded as essentially Jewish names, had such notices and badges stuck on their doors, bringing upon them the contumely of the incensed German population.

In the shadow of approaching doom, men tend to deny its reality. With the arrival of Hitler's National Socialism, both German and foreign opinion held the view that the attack upon the Jew, promised in fifteen years of speeches by Hitler and Göring, would not transpire, but the immemorial cry of the German went up to the heavens: '*Es tut nichts, der Jude wird verbrannt*' (It matters not, the Jew will have to burn), and the race seemingly chosen by Destiny to follow an Ishmaelitic path felt the wrath of Germany's pent-up hatred and years of disgrace and economic distress. The boycott was on. Instead of the medieval method of firing the Ghetto the bank account was being frozen.

NATIONAL SOCIALISTS, COMRADES !

After fourteen years of inner dissension, the German people has politically overcome its divisions of caste, class, calling, and religion, and carried through an upheaval which banishes the Marxist-Jewish spectre.

In the weeks which followed the 30 January a peculiar National Revolution was effected in Germany. Despite long and severe oppression and persecutions, the millions who stand behind the Government of the National Revolution, in perfect calm and discipline, gave the new Reichs leadership legal sanction to carry out reforms of the German Nation from top to toe. On 5 March the overwhelming majority of German voters expressed confidence in the new regime. The completion of the National Revolution thereby became a popular demand.

The Marxist-Jewish bigwigs evacuated their key positions like miserable cowards. Despite all the noise they made, not one dared to offer serious opposition. Most of them have left the masses they led in the lurch and, taking with them overflowing money-bags, have fled abroad. To the unexampled discipline and quietness with which the process of transformation has been effected, and to that alone, the authors and beneficiaries of our misfortune owe their almost entire immunity from ill-treatment.

Hardly a hair on their heads has been harmed. Compare this self-control of the national uprising in Germany with the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, which has slain more than three million people, and then you can measure the extent of gratitude which the guilty criminals in the German downfall owe to the energies of the national uprising. Compare, too, the terrible strife and destruction in the revolution by these men of November themselves, their wholesale shooting in the years 1918 and 1919, the massacre of defenceless opponents, and then the difference of our National uprising will be seen to be astonishing indeed.

The men at the helm have by their conduct declared to the world that they desire to live at peace with it. The German people follow them loyally in this.

Germany desires no world chaos and no international complications, but national revolutionary Germany is firmly resolved to put an end to internal anomalies. Now that the enemies of the nation at home have been rendered harmless by the people themselves, what we have long expected is happening. The Communist and Marxist criminals and their Jewish intellectual instigators,

who fled abroad with their resources in good time, are developing from their safe retreats an unscrupulous and treacherous campaign against the German people generally. As it is impossible for them to lie in Germany, they are starting from the capitals of the former Entente the same campaign against the young national Germany as they carried on against contemporary Germany from the beginning of the war.

Lies and calumnies of hair-raising perversity are being showered upon Germany. Blood-curdling fables of dismembered Jewish corpses, of gouged-out eyes and hacked-off hands are being disseminated for the purpose of defaming Germany and its people a second time in the eyes of the world, as they succeeded in doing in the year 1914.

Millions of innocent people, nations with which the German Nation only wants to live in peace, are being incited against us by these unscrupulous criminals. German goods, German labour are to be internationally boycotted. There is not enough distress for them in Germany, it must be intensified.

They are lying about Jewesses who have been slain, about Jewish girls who have been violated in front of their parents, about cemeteries which have been laid waste. All of it is a big lie, invented for the purpose of starting a new world-war drive.

If we looked on supine at these crazy criminals any longer, we should be accomplices in their acts. The National Socialist party will henceforth assume the defensive against this great crime with the weapons that are designed to strike the guilty. For the guilty are with us, they dwell among us, and every day abuse the hospitality of the German people.

At a time when millions of our people have nothing to eat, when hundreds of thousands of German brain-workers are without work, these Jewish intellectual writers loll at their ease amongst us and take every advantage of our hospitality.

What would America do if the German-Americans should sin against America as these Jews are doing against Germany? The National Revolution did not hurt a hair of their head. They could go about their business as before, although corruption has been extirpated, no matter by whom committed. Membership of the Jewish race or the Mosaic religion is no more a licence for criminals than membership of a Christian denomination. For decades Germany has admitted every foreigner without question. We have 135 people to the square kilometre, while America has less than fifteen. Yet America has fixed quotas for its immigra-

208 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

tion, and some nations are kept out altogether. Oblivious to her own needs, Germany has for decades refrained from adopting these measures. In gratitude for this forbearance, a handful of Jewish writers, professors, and hucksters are stirring up the world against us while millions of our countrymen are unemployed and going to waste. It is time to stop this. The Germany of the National Revolution is not the Germany of a cowardly commonalty.

We see the distress and poverty of our own countrymen and feel impelled to leave nothing undone which might stop any further injury to our people. For the Jews among us are responsible for these lies and calumnies. From them proceeds this atrocity campaign against Germany. It rests with them to bring to heel the liars in the rest of the world. As they refuse to do this, we shall take care that this atrocity campaign against Germany is not directed against the innocent German people, but against the responsible instigators themselves. The boycott and atrocity campaign must not hit the German people, but must strike the Jews themselves with thousandfold severity.

This National Socialist proclamation ran like fire through the Reich, and while many shook their heads none dared to disobey.

Owing to the pressure of leading industrial elements standing near to the German Government, the boycott was called off at the close of the first day. No blood was shed on that day, but the humiliation of the Jew begged a description. At last it was realized that he was an outcast in the German State. The Third Reich had adopted the anti-Semitism of the National Socialist party, and the world realized that Germany had become a National Socialist State.

One can understand and appreciate most things of the Third Reich ; the rearmament, the intense nationalism, and the ruling by decree when a State is alleged to be in danger. England has experienced all these things in its expansion. A healthy nation must seek to expand like a growing child. England, in the dim past, had a sorry record with the Jews, but that was in the early days of a

civilization which was dawning. The Nazi leaders, great showmen and organizers as they are, struck one false note in the introduction of the Third Reich—their method of solving the Jewish problem. Students of history will confirm in later years that Germany had a Jewish problem, just as England and America, now Jew-conscious, has such a problem, but legislation offers a less barbarous weapon than physical excesses. So much for the thought, but it is an interesting commentary on world psychology that Germany has weathered the storm of disapproval and has liquidated the Jewish problem without further protest from abroad.

.

The demonstration of 1 April over, the Cabinet proceeded to bring into law statutes relating to the employment of non-Aryan officials in the State, cultural fields and commerce and medicine. These laws and the effect of their application are too well known to need further description, the sum and substance of them being that no Jew could hold office in Germany, could practise only under certain conditions, in the liberal professions, and that none could participate in the fields of art, music, film, Press, theatre and sport. Jews wishing to continue their professions and occupations could, in future, do so in association, and practice, only with members of their own race. Jewish stores were to sell only to members of their own race, and, generally speaking, the Jews in Germany were given 'notice to quit.' The weapon to enforce this order was the 'cold' pogrom, more devastating in effect than any burning and branding.

Above the turmoil rang the voice of Hermann Göring : 'I order ! I order ! I order !' And as the months wore on he became more confident in his public speeches and appearances. He assumed the role of the benevolent despot, and on occasion would address mass gatherings

210 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY
as 'my people,' to all of which the people responded with a remarkable fervour.

Ever since Adolf Hitler had become Chancellor he had been anxious to establish closer relations with Mussolini. He sought for the Duce to visit him in Germany. The Italian Dictator thought that for the meeting to take place in Italy would be more in keeping with the dignity of the country which first adopted totalitarianism. Kindly messages passed between the two and eventually someone suggested a meeting in a neutral country. He had probably heard of Napoleon's famous meeting with the Tsar of all the Russias at Tilsit—on a raft. The difficulty with Catholicism proved the way out. Von Papen, in his capacity of a Chamberlain of the Pope (not forgetting, of course, his office as Vice-Chancellor of the Reich), went with Hermann Göring to Rome around the Easter of 1933. Göring's sojourn after the 1923 debacle, and his many subsequent visits, his personal contact with Mussolini, and his close relations with Prince Philip of Hesse (now Grand-duke of Hesse), who married Princess Mafalda of Italy, all made him an admirable ambassador of Hitler and of Germany to Italy and to the Vatican. The Pope had put out feelers for an understanding with the new rulers in Germany; he desired Dollfuss and Hitler to become friends. Therefore the good Catholic von Papen could negotiate with the Vatican while the fighter in the cause of totalitarianism could discuss with Mussolini and his Ministers a closer relationship between Germany and Italy. The best testimonial to the result of Göring's good offices for Hitler in Italy can best be seen in the white enamel cross, superimposed upon a star, which Hermann Göring wears below his row of German decorations, the Order of the Annunziatas, the premier Italian order, founded by the Count of Savoy in 1362.

Hitler knew the value of this Göring, the man whom

the crowd worshipped, and the man who could get things done. He knew that recognition had publicly to be given to prove to Göring's huge following that his work was appreciated. He himself must surely have been mightily thankful that among his followers he had at least one true soul. His appreciation found expression in a telegram which Hermann Göring received in Italy, handed to him by the German Ambassador, Hassell, before an admiring crowd composed of Italian Fascisti and the German colony. It was addressed to : Minister President Göring, and read : 'I appoint you Prime Minister of Prussia as from to-day (10 April). Please take over your duties in Berlin as from 20 April. I am happy to be able to give you this token of my confidence in you and gratitude for the great services you have rendered to the German people during the past ten years, in which you have been a fighter in our movement for the regeneration of Germany. I thank you, too, for your services as Commissioner for Internal Affairs in Prussia in successfully carrying through the National Revolution, and above all I thank you for the unique loyalty with which you have bound your destiny to mine.'

The telegram was from Hitler ; this spectacular method of appointing a Minister to a new additional post proved an unqualified success. The German people warmed more and more to Göring, and upon his return to Berlin he was lionized at the Tempelhof airport.

The few weeks afterwards found him working in the Ministry of the Prussian Interior until three and four o'clock every morning, yet he was fresh enough to attend Cabinet meetings at ten o'clock on the same morning, visit and receive foreign diplomats and journalists. At this time Hermann Göring was a full Minister of the Reich (without portfolio), President of the Reichstag, Prime Minister of Prussia, Emergency Commissioner of Prussia, Statthalter of Prussia, and Reichs Commissioner

for Air. This latter department had been created, for previously the air traffic control had been in the portfolio of the Minister for Transport.

Göring's appointment relating to Prussia seemed rather top-heavy. The emergency office one understood at a time when an opposition Government had refused to truckle to the Reich; the Statthaltership, in the light of the powers conferred on every holder of such an office throughout the Reich, appeared to cancel out the power attaching to the Commissionership, while the Prime Minister's rank, judging Prussia to be aligned with all other German States, seemed a sinecure, since the Prime Minister was a head of a State Government without initiative—a Government which was intended to be appointed and controlled by the Statthalter. The position appeared on the surface as above postulated, but greater things were afoot. Göring was to have, next to Hitler, supreme power in the Reich. This multiplicity of offices gave it and actually paved the way to Prussian administration absorbing the Reich through the months to come. Through the occupation of these offices Göring was to become supreme controller of the State and Municipal theatres and controller of the Prussian State forests. Many popular newspapers have seen fit to crack a joke now and again over this latter post, and at first blush there does seem something incongruous in a Prime Minister looking after the planting and felling of trees, but, as will be disclosed later, the care of the nation's timber supplies is a key function in its economy in either war or peace.

.

By 25 April Göring had diplomatically won over the Stahlhelm to the Nazi cause completely. For weeks he had been hammering away at Franz Seldte the anomalous position of his men in relation to the Sturm Abteilungen.

Seldte, proud of the strong body of good old front-line soldiers he had, through years just as difficult as Göring's, organized into a machine of precision, pointed to their dignity, whereupon Göring pointed to his own. He was not ashamed, despite his war record and honours, to follow where a one-time non-commissioned officer of the Kaiser's army led. Finally it was announced that the Stahlhelm would be merged into the Sturm Abteilungen. This added two or three hundred thousand men to the Nazis' already impressive strength and marked another step towards National unity. The Nationalist party, of which the Stahlhelm could be considered the fighting force, complained that its service to the National Revolution was being overlooked and that the wishes of its members in the Cabinet were being slighted. These complaints fell on deaf ears, and Göring, 'the man with the police,' swooped in his own time—in June a police wagon rolled up to the front door of the headquarters of the German Nationalist party, confiscated the records, removed the executive, sealed the building, and thus ended the greatness of the Junker politicians and industrialists. The von Papens, the Thyssens, and the Hugenburgs, thinking and planning to cage and train the 'wild' men, had been swallowed up in the maw of the Frankenstein of their own making. A few days before the close of April the Commissionership of Air was converted into a Ministry, and consequently Göring blossomed out as Reichs Luftfahrt Minister, actually Minister for Air (but Germany as yet had no 'legal' right in the air), but literally Air Traffic Minister. These distinctions are worth noting because the revolution was proceeding, as the President and Chancellor stressed so often, with the strictest legality.

On the day of his appointment he took official delivery of the giant monoplane D. 2500, a Junkers G. 38 four-engined 42-seater air-liner, and before formally handing

it over into service to the Deutsche Lufthansa, he christened it the *General Feld Marschall von Hindenburg*. Another dream had come true. Germany was to be supreme in civil aircraft.

For many long years he had made himself a thorn in the flesh of the Transport Minister and the Social Democrat Government, in the Reichstag. 'Why,' he would thunder, 'have we no Secretary for Air? Why are you all not moved to display some effort in building up a German air service? Does it please you to flaunt the poverty of German civil aviation before the world? I speak as an airman, and am entitled to be heard.' His pressure brought some response from the Government, but it was only a token to still his party's insistence. The best planes were used on the London-Berlin, Paris-Berlin, Moscow-Berlin routes, while the internal air routes were serviced by antiquated single-engine planes, a source of danger to the passengers, as Göring so often pointed out. The foreign aviation manufacturers were supplying Germany with aero engines, and Göring was continually approached by inventors, leaders of the aero industry and the Lufthansa to press for an increase in Governmental financial support. 'You've got nothing to hope for from Parliament,' was always his reply. 'Wait until we have the power and we will put all this straight.' Patiently they all waited until in 1933 their patience was rewarded. The German Air Service jumped in quality of machines, number, and services with such a bound that international aviation began to take notice.

As *Gleichschaltung* was in vogue in these early days of the Nazi Revolution, it was applied to aviation. All flying clubs and gliding clubs were merged into the German Air Club and German Air Sport Union under the control of Bruno Loerzer, supported by such spirits of the air as Ernst Udet, the war pilot of Richthofen's

days, who flew to North Greenland to rescue a film expedition. In 1932, Wolfgang von Gronau, the senior pilot of a Dornier Wal, which was the first flying-boat to circumnavigate the world in 1932, Christiansen, Zeppelin commander and commander of the famous super flying-boat Do-X which flew from Newfoundland to Lisbon in 1932, and Bolle, a war-time airman friend of Göring's. Every man a hero, a leader to whom the young fledgelings in the air clubs could look up. Here is explained the startling success of Germany's progress in air-rearmament—the nation had leaders in this field, who had kept their hands in at their jobs by many hazardous flights which had excited world attention and praise, while in Hermann Göring it had a superman of the air. The name Richthofen in Germany is like a magic key to a secret door. To-day it is more honoured and possibly wider known than it was in 1918. The last commander of the Richthofen circus therefore was a man to be reckoned with; he had also added lustre to his laurels by his blind loyalty to the Nazi movement and his persistent endeavours on its behalf. Now, in his Ministry of Air he ruled as king.

The air power of a nation, in addition to possessing powerful weapons of attack and defence, must also be led by a personality—who is an airman and who can imbue the youth of a country with the ideals and courage of the air—in Göring, the Third Reich has found such a personality, and how he wields his power will become the hope or fear of Europe.

.

Aerial strength lies not only in methods and means of aggression. To be properly effective it must be supported by adequate and efficient plans for defence against air attack. Quite apart from the military angle, any new war will be one waged without regard to rules

216 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

of the game or civil objectives. It will be ruthless, and the nation which gets away with a flying start will win. Naturally, in the light of our present knowledge, attempts will be made, by terrorizing the civilian population, to enforce a quick surrender and favourable terms to the aggressor. Consequently the adequate protection of that civil population, the weak link in the chain of the new war, becomes of paramount importance. No matter how bravely it wishes to hold out; regardless of the morale and ability of its fighting forces, the plans of protection against attack from the air must be perfect, and must, above all things, be supported by an air-minded body of public opinion.

Of all these factors Hermann Göring was quite well aware, and as early as April 1933 he had brought into being an organization to meet such emergency in Germany.

With very little early publicity the *Reichsluftschutzbund* (The German Air Defence Union) appealed to the people and commenced to gather members. The psychology of the appeal can best be gauged from a perusal of the document.

GERMAN MEN AND WOMEN

Since the end of the war universal disarmament has been promised to the German people—but the truth is that the world to-day, more than ever, bristles with weapons.

Thousands of war aeroplanes are standing ready to start around Germany, and we are perfectly defenceless in the air.

Defence from the ground they have nearly taken from us, and Germany is, through the weapon of the air, more vulnerable than any other country.

Every German town is in close reach of the Bomber and our most important industrial centres are very near to foreign aircraft.

AIR-DEFENCE HAS BECOME, THEREFORE, A QUESTION OF LIFE AND DEATH FOR OUR GERMAN PEOPLE

It requires years of building up under strong and expert leadership.

But it is not enough when only the Government works for it—the help of the whole Nation can only bring success.

In order to prevent blunders, we have created the new German Air-defence Union, which is the only organization of this kind and which is built up on national foundations.

It will prove to the German people the importance of air-defence and will enlist their assistance.

It will demonstrate to the population the various measures to be taken for self-protection—real measures, apart from colourless theories.

It will awaken in the minds of large sections of the people—moral strength—which is necessary for selfless work and sacrifice.

It will create as a basis this moral strength, without which a Nation cannot sustain the rigours of air attack; only a Nation, united together with the inflexible will to live, can withstand these dangers.

Therefore, I ask every man and woman who loves his Fatherland to help the German Air-defence Union with all their strength.

Whoever becomes a member, whoever helps with work or helps through giving money, helps in his own defence—for the defence of his family, his land or his factory, and fulfils in the same time a National Duty.

A Nation which, idly and without will, gives herself in abandon to the arbitrariness of a foreign power, has no existence in this world whatever.

But a Nation which has the Iron Will to live and to exist will stand all the dangers from the air with success.

GÖRING

BERLIN,

29 April 1933.

WHAT YOU MUST KNOW ABOUT AIR DEFENCE

Germany has disarmed under the pressure of the Treaty of Versailles.

The neighbouring States of Germany are most heavily armed.

The most dangerous and pernicious weapon is the weapon used from the air.

More than 10,000 war aeroplanes stand on German frontiers, ready to start.

In one hour every German town can be attacked from the frontier by bombing aeroplanes.

Military flying, also bombing aeroplanes and chaser-scout aeroplanes, are forbidden us.

218 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

Also, defence from the ground is forbidden us.

From air armaments the whole German population is in danger. The bombs bring danger to young and old, man, woman, and child, without distinction.

Therefore, everybody must take care, for his own protection, because the Government can never do it sufficiently.

This self-defence must start in every family.

Comprehensive working together in air-defence by all tenants, in every house, must be the self-evident duty.

Voluntary work in the German Air-defence Union is necessary to the State.

AIR-DEFENCE IS SELF-DEFENCE—AIR-DEFENCE IS NECESSARY

WHAT YOU MUST DO AT ONCE FOR YOUR OWN PROTECTION

Choose a protection room most suited for this purpose. .

Have material ready for propping the ceiling and for sealing windows and doors.

In the rooms under the roof clear out all the rubbish and other material prone to easy ignition.

The wooden walls under the roof should be replaced by wire-meshing.

Have supplies of dry sand and shovels ready.

Have water buckets and other fire-fighting devices ready to hand for putting out fires in the roof.

Take further advice for all these actions of self-protection from the district leader of the German Air-defence Union or from the Air-defence house warden.

HOW CAN YOU WORK WITH THE AIR-DEFENCE AND SO HELP GERMANY TO SAFEGUARD ITSELF ?

Become at once a member of the German Air-defence Union.

Tell your friends, acquaintances and relations to do likewise. The membership subscription is so low that the very poorest German can take active part in the work of the German Air-defence Union.

Listen to the advice and explanations of the officials of the German Air-defence Union about the dangers from the air, the air weapons and the actions for self-protection.

Read the illustrated papers of the German Air-defence Union and pass them on to your friends.

AIR-DEFENCE IS NATIONAL DUTY

I am interested in the efforts of the German Air-defence Union and request conditions and information.

Name

Occupation

Town

Street

Please send form when filled in to the district leader of the German Air-defence Union. If there is no district leader, hand it in at the nearest police station or to one of the higher offices of the German Air-defence Union.

Newspapers, public meetings, and wireless were brought into play to warn the German people of the air danger and to appeal for their support. The ex-Reichswehr General Grimme was made President of the Air Defence Union, which began to spread throughout the Reich with the popularity of football pools. Its organization was designed by Göring as Air Minister, but its administration was in the hands of a National executive, each member of which was chosen for his particular suitability for the post. Consequently a strong body of ex-officers, ex-airmen, architects, doctors, engineers, scientists, transport experts, and journalists came into being, and by the following year the total strength of the movement was over 5,000,000 and its instructors numbered 35,000. By that time it owned its own illustrated monthly magazine, *Die Sirene* (the Syren). At the present time the membership may be considered to be the total able-bodied population of the Reich, for now membership is compulsory on every fit adult who is not otherwise in the Government service.

By its close co-operation with the Reichswehr, ambu-

lance services, fire brigades, and *Technische Nothilfe* (Technical Emergency Service), the German Air Defence Union represents some real attempt at protecting a civilian population against air-raids, and now regular training and practice has become a part of the life of the German people.

Having been told by Göring that air-defence is self-defence, the people rushed to follow the banner unfurled by him, and monthly contributions must by now have provided the organization with a substantial bank account. Discipline throughout the union is enforced rigidly. A good excuse must be forthcoming for non-attendance at instruction and practice and, whipped up by incessant appeals and demonstrations, attendance is fairly consistent. The subdivision of rank runs evenly down from the president to the lowest official known as the *Haus Wart* (house warden), whose responsibility is to ensure the safety of each occupant of his house, and this, in large cities and towns, usually means, owing to the system of flat-dwelling, that he may be responsible for the protection of a block of flats, whose occupants total a hundred persons. In addition to these duties he has to collect the subscriptions. This *Haus Wart* is in turn responsible to the *Block Wart* (street warden) who has to receive orders from the *Oberblock Wart* (sub-postal-district warden). Over all these minor but very essential officials is placed the *Ortsgruppenführer* (district leader), who is answerable to the *Gau Leiter* (city, town, province, or rural area leader), the latter receiving his authority and instructions from the *Præsidium* (Presidential Headquarters).

As finances allow, protection-rooms and bomb- and gas-proof cellars are being prepared in all areas, which are fitted and equipped with ultra-modern gas- and fire-fighting devices. As a temporary measure, pending the complete equipment of these special rooms, each

house warden is supplied with dressings, drugs, solutions, and fire-fighting devices. In order to relieve the pressure on ambulance and fire-brigade officials, in the event of potential air-attack, more and more members are being trained in their work until in due course each of the members will be capable of adequately dealing with work which, at the moment, must of necessity fall on these officials.

Well distributed throughout the large cities of Germany are *Luftschutzschulen* (air protection schools) where members are instructed by experts. They are taught every known means of protection against every type of poison gas yet invented—they are taught even the relative potencies of each class—red, yellow, green, blue, and so on 'cross bombs.

Every member is instructed to replace as many wooden house fittings as possible with light metal, iron or steel, and a new fire-proof paint has now appeared in Germany, a great demand having arisen owing to the instructions circulated by the union advocating its use.

Throughout Germany, situated in the principal thoroughfares, are dummy aerial torpedoes, bearing the badge of the union, followed by a notice of warning that such weapons fall from the air on defenceless homes.

Mock raids are events of regular occurrence, and during the summer of 1934 the writer was an interested spectator of such a raid in Bremen. Nowadays Bremen is a very vulnerable city—not always so. Notices were posted on every public building, and the newspapers carried announcements to the effect that bomb and gas practice would take place around certain hours on a certain day. A section of the city was attacked and the work of the Air-Defence Union was proved to be extremely efficient. Selected members were 'casualties,' and received appropriate attention. Other sections of the local union came out into the streets steel-helmeted and masked, and

propped up 'falling' buildings, while others cleared the streets of gas by chloride spraying, this causing a chemical reaction owing to the incompatibility of the spraying agent with the elements in the gas.

In various parts of Germany the writer has seen young men and women constructing bomb- and gas-proof 'dugouts'; he has seen workmen removing wooden roof structures in existing houses and replacing them with a new type of concrete roof. Everywhere and always, this work goes on apace—and it is carried out openly.

The most interesting fact arising out of this system is that the work is being carried out with the pennies of the people.

The illustrated paper of the German Air-Defence Union is an outstanding example of propaganda. The theme throughout its pages and each issue is 'What other nations are doing in air-defence and attack.'

Pictures of the latest types of English, French, and American fighting planes are a regular feature—pictures of English Air Force activities which are not to be found in any English illustrated paper—which implies an excellent intelligence service.

Firms manufacturing steel helmets, gas masks, drugs, and chemicals, bombs containing blank charges for practice purposes, advertise regularly within the pages of this interesting journal. Every feature of this magazine is startling evidence that Germany is aware of the dangers that any future war will bring, and is taking every possible precaution to protect the civilian population.

.

Under the Pact of Paris, the document of 1926 which controls air traffic matters, Germany was permitted air-police and means of air-defence. The Reichs Govern-

ment had never officially taken advantage of this right, although from time to time sporadic attempts were made in certain provinces to organize air-defence leagues. The various party organizations such as the S.A., Stahlhelm, and associations of old soldiers claimed that the light planes possessed by them came within the Pact, but the Social Democrat Governments, more frightened of foreign opinion than annoyed at the ostensible impertinence of these organizations to its decrees and authority, always promptly prohibited such attempts.

When Göring became Air Minister, however, he naturally did his utmost to bring about an atmosphere favourable to substantial air rearmament. It was his mission and he had long foretold what he would do once in office. Hence the Reichsluftschutzbund. Air-police were organized immediately afterwards, and thus the letter of the Paris Pact was being observed and taken full advantage of. The National Press, by now under the control of Dr. Joseph Goebbels, propaganda chief of the National Socialist party, and now Minister of Propaganda and Public Enlightenment, began to discuss aviation in its columns. Aerial sport was talked of, and on 15 June at the Tempelhof Aerodrome a gigantic National Flying Day was organized, at which the most famous pilots appeared and the best types of machines put in some excellent aerobatics. The crowd clamoured for more. With the public behind the Air Minister, the progress of German aviation was assured. The National Press (by this time all opposition newspapers had been banned or absorbed by those owned by Nazi or Nationalist proprietors) periodically carried aviation supplements in which the leitmotif was the foundation of a new German air force based upon the traditions of the old Richthofen squadron.

On the morning of 24 June there was a great stir in Berlin among the foreign diplomats and newspaper men.

224 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

Telephones buzzed. Each Embassy contacted the other and then the Reichs Air Ministry. Which country was responsible for the outrage? The cause of all this flutter was a scare-headed article carried on the main page of every German newspaper, couched in identical words—a Government inspired Press notice.

RED PLAGUE OVER BERLIN

FOREIGN PLANES OF AN UNKNOWN TYPE—ESCAPED UNRECOGNIZED
DEFENCELESS GERMANY

TO-MORROW IT MIGHT BE GAS OR INCENDIARY BOMBS

BERLIN, 23.6.33.

This afternoon foreign aeroplanes of a type unknown in Germany appeared over Berlin and dropped leaflets containing insults to the Reichs Government, in the Government quarter and in the eastern districts. As the Air Police, which was immediately informed, had no machines of its own and the sport planes stationed in the aerodrome did not equal the speed of the foreign planes, the latter were able to escape unrecognized.

This incident throws a glaring light on the untenable position in which Germany finds itself at present. Aeroplanes of a type which have not been seen in Germany, up to now, can appear unhindered over the Government buildings and drop their leaflets containing unheard-of insults on the German Reich. To-day it is leaflets, to-morrow it may be gas or incendiary bombs, which mean death and destruction.

The German public rightly asks: What is our Air Police for? Is it not the most natural thing to assume that the Air Police would be in a position to interfere at once, and to prevent the foreign attackers' criminal activities. Far from it—Germany possesses an Air Police, it is true, but that body is only called by that name because it functions as supervisor of the aerodromes. Germany does not possess one single police aeroplane. And why not? Because the dictates of the enemy Powers condemn Germany to impotence against violation of her air territory. Every bird is allowed to defend itself, if its nest is attacked. Only Germany has to look on with her wings clipped and her claws blunted while her nest is being defiled and may be destroyed soon.

The German people ask for protection against moral poisoning,

which may be followed to-morrow by material destruction. The German people demand from a Government, aware of its responsibilities, immediate measures to remedy the state of defencelessness in the air which has by now become unbearable. We ask the Air Ministry—which has certainly achieved a great deal in the sphere of civil aviation in collaboration with other peoples: ‘What does the Air Ministry intend to do against things of that type? *Videant consules!*’

Immediately after reading the news of this ‘Ghost’ air-raid on Berlin, the writer rang up Göring at his Ministry and asked for his views on the matter. ‘Yesterday’s incident shows how defenceless Germany really is,’ he replied. ‘I have not one single plane which I could have sent up in defence and pursuit. I am going to do my utmost to build at least a few police planes to be prepared against any further attacks. These police planes will not become a question of military defence, they are an absolute necessity. We want defence planes. From the events of yesterday it becomes perfectly apparent that if any State intends to attack Germany, it has only to block the frontier and send along bombing planes against us. We would be perfectly impotent.’ Very shortly after this conversation the German Air Ministry was in communication with the appropriate department of the British Embassy in Berlin, seeking to obtain export permits from the British Government in order that police planes and engines could be ordered from British aircraft manufacturers.¹

.

While he was able with reasonable ease to control his Air Ministry, Göring was badgered by outbreaks of insubordination in the S.A., fostered and led by Roehm. The S.A. in Bavaria threatened to break away,

¹ These permits were granted by the MacDonald administration and became the subject of questions in the House of Commons in the summer of 1934.

and again the 'spook' of separatism rose in the Munich streets. Thousands of S.A. men were thrown into concentration camps, and it was pointed out to Hitler that the Brown-shirts were a menace to the very revolution their existence had brought about. Towards the close of June he was involved in a church dispute in Prussia which gave rise to much levity in official quarters, and ultimately the joke reached the masses, who joined in the general laugh. This sealed Göring's popularity among the common folk of Germany, and from 1933 he became familiarly known to them all as 'Our Hermann.'

While Hitler continued to be known as the Leader, Göring and Goebbels acquired nicknames, and when a public man becomes familiar with popular opinion his future is 'set fair.' And so 'our Hermann' and the 'little Doctor' will go down as such in German history.

A section of the German Evangelical Church had founded the 'Reichs Church' and appointed Pastor von Bodelschwingh as 'Reichs Bishop.' This caused consternation in the Hitler camp, for it smacked of another Luther. The Prussian Minister of Education, Dr. Bernhard Rust, appointed a church commissioner, who, with the expedition the Germans had now come to expect, dissolved the church delegation and sacked the parsons holding allegiance to the self-appointed 'Reich Bishop.' Whereupon the new Luther resigned. A further dispute was in the offing, so Göring immediately set his seal to the whole transaction by announcing in no uncertain tones who managed Prussia, church included.

'I learn with great regret of the Church dispute which has broken out. Until the revolution of 1918 the King of Prussia was the Summus Episcopus of the Prussian Church. In my opinion, these functions of Summus Episcopus have devolved upon the Prussian Ministry of State, that is, upon the Prussian Prime

Minister, and therefore upon me. For this reason no alteration in the constitution of the Church is conceivable without my sanction. No intimation whatever has been received by my Government from the Church concerning the proposed appointment of a Reich Bishop.'

Upon hearing of this incident an artist in the film colony drew a cartoon of Göring walking down Unter den Linden complete with robes and mitre. This cartoon was pinned up in a famous grill-room frequented by artists, writers, and Göring himself. The caption ran: 'Our Hermann is now Summus Episcopus.' This, of course, was a tilt at his rapidly gathering array of offices. Göring saw the joke and laughed at himself as heartily as the millions who heard of it later. The artist was not immediately spirited away to a concentration camp and has survived to have several of his paintings hung in an exhibition opened by Hermann Göring.

The next day, however, Dr. Otto Wagener, the Nazi Reichs Commissioner for Economics (equivalent to the British President of the Board of Trade) was summarily thrown into a concentration camp to think over his too ardently voiced academic Socialism.

During the last days of July there was a trial mobilization of the Reichswehr throughout Germany, and this caused the Roehm faction furiously to think. Hitler, a few days before at Bad Reichenhall, the heart of the country in which revolt was simmering, had declared to a conference of S.A. and S.S. leaders: 'I will suppress every attempt to disturb the existing order as ruthlessly as I will deal with the so-called second revolution, which could lead only to chaotic conditions.' And forthwith announced that the National Revolution was over. Foreign representations and pressure from the Reichswehr chiefs had impressed him with the moral and physical menace of the S.A. remaining in such a state of concentration.

228 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

From now on the National Socialist party had become the State, and its myrmidons would have to consent to regimentation in the State or——? Roehm's answer to this was to parade 600,000 S.A. men on the Tempelhofer Feld in Berlin and to cry: 'The S.A. is here and it will remain. Whoever thinks that the work of the S.A. is finished must reckon with it.' Nothing happened that day, but a few days later the auxiliary police of Prussia (S.A. men who had been specially enlisted in February and granted immunity from punishment for all their deeds, *vide* Göring's proclamation of 10 February) were dissolved by special decree of Göring. Any 'Putsch' by Roehm's followers now and they would all be treated as rebels by every soldier, policeman, and S.S. man in the Reich. The odds were too much. And another source of trouble was, for the time, nipped in the bud by the man with the 'iron hand.'

Göring had for months warned Hitler and his fellow Ministers against the activities of Roehm and his associates. Roehm was just a buccaneer—a mercenary who gave his service to the highest bidder. He saw in the actual command of the S.A. a weapon which would enable him to have his own way. He was never concerned with the real success of the National Socialist movement or the future of Germany. He had never starved, confident that success would come. His swashbuckling organization, the Reichskriegsflagge had let the Nazis down in November 1923—its many contingents had not marched on the evening of the 8th to converge on Berlin with the main body of Nazis which should have moved out from Munich. While Hitler was in prison and Göring was in exile, Roehm was a lord of creation in Bolivia, whence he had gone as adviser on the reorganization of that country's army. Only after the Nazi party had become strong in opposition throughout the Reich did he rejoin it, although he had been in Germany some

while before that time. Many observers claim that Roehm built the S.A. ; that is not so. That he was a brilliant organizer cannot be denied, but, at the time of his becoming chief of staff (he was never commander) the organization of the Sturm Abteilungen was complete. He had only to control it as liaison between Göring, its leader, and Hitler, its supreme head.

Roehm's Left tendencies were an empty show ; the only Left propensity of him was his moral conduct. His continual demand that the radical section of the original Nationalist Socialist programme should be introduced was motivated entirely by his pocket. He saw a cutting-up of assets in which he would be a chief beneficiary. All through the summer of 1933 Göring had counselled no quarter to the Roehm faction, but Hitler in his wisdom refrained from taking any decisive step. It is to be presumed that he, like all other politicians, past and present, desired to feel his way before committing himself to this or that faction. Whatever was in the mind of the Nazi chieftain, his reluctance to dispense with Roehm and many others in the S.A. brought untold loss and suffering to the German people during 1933-4, for they had become parasites on the people. Without in any way wishing to excuse the excesses which occurred in Germany during the first year of the Third Reich, beyond the fact that such things accompany any revolution, much of the blame for these should be laid upon that section of the S.A. which supported Roehm, Ernst, and Heines.¹

The world gazed upon the German scene and shook its head. It could not last this new Germany. The masses would soon tire of flags, festivals, and circuses—

¹ For instance, Karl Ernst, when he was arrested on board a South American-bound liner in Hamburg on 30 June 1934, had in his possession bearer securities to the value of 2,000,000 marks. This was the result of a systematic brigandage he had practised on small Berlin business men, after the manner of the American gangster.

they would want work and bread. The Jewish exodus incited the democratic nations to reprisals on their behalf and Germany's export trade dwindled.

Yet employment rose because public works schemes were being put in hand. Arrangements had to be made to enable the Jews to take their capital out of Germany over a period, and this further constricted the foreign exchange situation.¹ To balance this, many Germans voluntarily placed their foreign credits at the disposal of the Reichsbank in exchange for internal currency. A law followed which made it compulsory for such credits and securities to be handed to the Reichsbank. Through successive months labour conditions improved, domestic markets brightened, and barter agreements with Balkan and South-American States made possible the work of reconstruction.

The manner in which Germany's unemployment had been reduced to surprisingly low figures has been treated of at great length in the Press during the past few years

¹ The general scheme, in most cases, was for all arrears of taxes to be paid and the total fortune agreed at a figure with the Finance Ministry. A *Reichsflugsteuer* (fugitive or flight tax) of 25 per cent of the total fortune was deducted at source by the Reichsbank for the Treasury. From the remaining total, which was the property of the 'fugitive' entirely, he was allowed to take to the country of his adoption a sum in foreign exchange equal to $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent of it, the balance being transferred to his new bank account in the exchange of the country of residence over a period of three years. Under this scheme, which was in general operation, the Jew was much better off than the German or foreign Aryan who, possessing funds in Germany, could not legally transfer them abroad, except on special permits, rarely granted. Therefore, it will be seen that many stories appearing in the foreign Press of the Jew who had lost his fortune can be taken for what they are worth. If he came to a foreign country without funds or documents promising funds, it becomes obvious that he never had any fortune in Germany or that one of several reasons existed to prevent him from applying for the benefit the law allowed him. The writer knows many wealthy and cultured German Jews who are too proud to leave the country in which their families have had their roots for six or seven hundred years, and who find no complaint with their surroundings other than the operation of the Nuremberg laws against their race. They hope for a return to normal. The German Government recently announced that it had collected over £6,000,000 in 1937 by way of fugitive tax.

and needs no mention here. Government decrees have controlled the prices of staple foodstuffs and profiteering receives severe punishment. Somehow the German Revolution held its own.

.

In late August of the first year of the new era, Hermann Göring was promoted direct from the rank of Captain to full General of the Infantry. This, of course, had as its main purpose the strengthening of the Nazi voice in army councils, and it also served to remove the anomaly of a junior captain, in military eyes, although his civil rank was that of Minister and more, giving orders to senior officers. Göring had also reorganized the country police in Prussia into more military formations. Hitherto they had been known loosely as 'Gendarmerie,' the actual French word being in colloquial use. Now the country police received the title of 'Landespolizei,' which means country police and adequately describes their function. These country police were organized into regiments, with ranks similar to the German Army, Oberst, Major, Hauptmann, and Leutnant. The crack regiment of the Prussian country police became known as the Hermann Göring Regiment, and later his police adjutant, Major Jacobi, succeeded to its command. These police, particularly, are remarkably well trained and could be absorbed at a moment's notice in the regular army. The presence of police Generals in the Prussian country police then, made it imperative for its chief to have at least equivalent rank, more especially so under German conditions.

Göring's entrance into the Army hierarchy made it possible for certain views long held on such questions as disarmament and Geneva to find forcible expression. In September Germany demanded, without equivocation, that the other nations should make some contribution

to world disarmament, in accordance with what they had all agreed to in the Treaty of Versailles. Germany was presented with a document for her signature, which meant, in effect, that the question of disarmament became conditional upon her good behaviour. The new German Government was being refused what Stresemann and Brüning had been offered by the Powers—mutual agreement on disarmament or Germany's right to rise gradually to a proportionate official arming *per capita* population. The situation had become awkward. The new Government which had promised to see the rights of every German maintained could not sit down under this humiliation, and the President recalled the German delegates from the Disarmament Conference, and in a solemn declaration announced Germany's firm intention to withdraw from membership of the League of Nations.

It was now that the astuteness of the Nazi Government first became noticed. Yes, the world would say, but do the people approve of these high-handed measures. So, in order to prove that the German people stood behind the Government, Hindenburg dissolved the Reichstag and the provincial State Parliaments, and announced a general election for 12 November. Actually it was more of a referendum than an election. The German people were asked to say 'Yes' to the policy of Hindenburg, rather than of Hitler, for it was the President and the President alone (because he had not forsworn the Constitution—that ended only with his death) who could take initiative in such momentous matters as had just been arrived at. Anyhow, to take popular view and hypothesize that it was Hitler seeking confirmation of his actions, it becomes patent that it was Sir John Simon who drove the German people on solidly behind the Hitler administration during those November days. Had he not, on behalf of Britain, pressed for an eight years probation for Germany, then the sore spot of German

honour would not have been touched and the November election would not have been held. Let Hindenburg's words confirm it. 'To you, my German comrades, the call now comes to declare yourself for this our policy of honour and peace. To-morrow the entire German people will bear witness that they are united in the feeling of National honour, in the demand for equal rights, and at the same time for genuine and lasting peace. To-morrow all Germans will manifest unitedly, and in an unmistakable manner, that Germany for the future can never again be treated as a second-class nation. . . . Follow me and the Chancellor. . . . Show the world that we have recovered and that with God's help we shall hold fast to German unity.'

Thus spoke Hindenburg on the eve of the poll which gave 40,000,000 votes to the President and his Chancellor's Government. German unity was the appeal, not the policy of Hitler. Unity for which the old Field-Marshal of the Great War, asked. A cord was struck in the memory of the old and in the imagination of the young. German honour and the desire to show the world it was no second-class nation. The result of this referendum proved to the world that Germany was behind the Government of reconstruction and was throwing in its lot by supporting it in its attempt to assert its hegemony in Central European affairs. To that section of the world which deals in cause and effect it meant more—it meant that some very energetic persons were about to transfer the fight from inside of Germany to without. The Third Reich had almost come into its own; but it had to await the passing of Hindenburg before it could become too self-assertive.

.

The year 1933 came to an end. Germany and the world had witnessed momentous happenings. 'Never, so

the pundits declared, had Europe been so near to war. But the next year would put a stop to the antics of these Nazis. The cold winter, the bad harvest, the dissatisfied people, the Poles, the Russians, and the French were all going to stop them. The underground Communist movement would terrorize the country and seize power and finally the pressure of international Jewry would bring Nazi Germany and all her leaders to heel. With the last thoughts hardly expressed into words, non-German Jews were rushing to acquire frozen mark balances at low rates in order to buy German goods cheaply and dump them on British and other foreign markets. Millions of marks changed hands this way, and these marks, being capable of buying goods and paying wages inside of Germany, were thus utilized to bolster up German economy and to give employment to German workmen. Jews having businesses in Germany scoured the world for Gentile business managers, who, for a consideration plus remunerative employment, would pose as the legal owners of such businesses—and so the so-called merry economic attack on Germany which was to bring her to her knees went on well into the summer of 1934. Germany, with tongue in cheek, returned to an industrial prosperity surprising to all.

For many months General Göring had been receiving distinguished Polish visitors. They were invited to hunt in the Prussian State forests and he was invited to hunt in Poland. The insistent demands in the German Press for a return of the Corridor simmered down and were heard of no more. The Saar plebiscite to be held in 1935 occupied its place. Friendly little paragraphs began to appear which led one to believe that the Poles were not such bad people after all. Anti-Jewish feeling broke out in Warsaw, Lodz, Wilno, and Cracow in greater volume than ever before. University students attacked Jewish students and professors, hundreds of Jews were

maltreated, and world attention was turned to Poland as a potential Nazi State.

The complimentary visits continued and Poland became just a little cold and distant to her traditional post-war protector—France. Then came the thunderclap of surprise. The German and Polish Governments announced that they had concluded a pact of non-aggression. It was to last for ten years, and both parties agreed to settle all disputes by peaceful negotiation. It was an international ray of sunshine in a world dark with the clouds of fear, misunderstanding, and jealousy. France countered with her pact with Russia, and the statesmen of Europe wasted their countries' time and money in a perambulatory round of the capitals, each whispering the deadliest of secrets into the other's ear. Göring had pulled trouble with Poland right out of the fire, in spite of the opposition his Danzig Nazi coadjutors were making.

However temporary this patched-up agreement with Poland became, at least it proved that conciliation could still be used in modern affairs. Strife between the two countries had been a natural condition in the days of Germany's parliamentary Government, and now with its dictatorship it had achieved quietness, if nothing else, on its eastern frontier.

About this time Göring had been reorganizing the Prussian State and municipal theatres and opera houses, all of which had lacked patronage for some while. With his customary energy he went fully into each item of expenditure, attended rehearsals and first nights, thereby encouraging society to support the State enterprises. The story runs that he and Hitler attended a special performance of *Lohengrin* at the Berlin State Opera. Hitler dozed off and Göring went out of the box to talk with friends. In the meantime the famous German singer who was playing *Lohengrin* came round to the

236 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

box to be presented, still in costume, for it was between the acts. Hitler, started up from his doze, blinked and exclaimed: "Really, Hermann, this is going too far." For the moment he had thought that the knight in shining armour standing before him was General Göring in another of his new uniforms.

.

Since Hermann Göring laid his wife, Carin, to rest in the simple little graveyard in Sweden in 1931, he had many times longed for the opportunity to bring her back to Germany, so that when his race was run he could rest by her side in his own German earth. The road to victory had been long and rough, and even after success his time was fully occupied by the cares of office and the bickerings of his S.A. men.

But in the early summer of 1934 his dearest wish was fulfilled. His loving companion of the hard years was to be brought home to Prussia.

Born in the country and brought up in the mountains of Southern Germany, Göring had always been in affinity with the open air. His early life as an airman had made him contemptuous of the towns and life in the towns. He is an open-air man, and directly after his party's triumph he converted two long-stifled wishes into reality. He built himself a house in the country which fulfilled his two desires—a country life and something that would be a monument to Carin Göring.

In a well-wooded stretch of land in the Schorfheide, an hour's motor drive from Berlin, he built from his own designs a country-house having no equal in the world—it is not a castle, nor a country-seat, neither is it a farmstead or hunting-lodge. It is just 'Carin Hall.' In architecture, design, and period one cannot place it. It is a house which every country lover burns to possess

at sight—it is unique and exquisite in its timbered, gabled, and rambling quiet way. To cap its merits, the grounds run down to the Wuckersee, one of the many quiet lakes around Berlin. For years this house lived in Göring's mind, and in 1933 with the collaboration of several of the best architects in the Prussian Ministry the idea took form and rose rapidly among the tall trees to become a monument to his dead wife.

Every fitting, down to the last door-handle, was designed by him. The materials, carpets, furniture, ornaments, and pictures were also chosen by him in an endeavour to coalesce his wishes—the place had to have charm and quietness—it had to be the embodiment of the spirit of the gentle woman to whom it was dedicated. Every window looks out upon the stillness of the forest or the quiet of the lake. The house has not sprung up as from the hands of some estate developer, but it has merged itself in the landscape, lying snug in among the gorse and fir, with a thatched roof which makes it both dignified and homely. From the main building spreads two side wings at right angles to it, thus enclosing a courtyard, in the centre of which is a lily pond. The main entrance forms the fourth side of the rectangle, built into which are old gates brought from Southern Germany and Italy, whose grandeur accentuates the simplicity of the whole.

The centre of the house is the main gallery, which is a veritable museum of art. Here Göring's personality has found full expression. An avid collector and connoisseur, he has placed, side by side with those gifts from monarchs, admirers, and statesmen, pieces which he himself has found in out-of-the-way antique shops and which he delights in acquiring as cheaply as possible. Rich tapestries show up the beauty of paintings by old masters and everywhere Gothic pieces of furniture remind one of the tremendous personality of the owner

238 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

of this beautiful and tasteful home. Every room is huge and raftered, and antlers adorn the walls.

Official visitors are received in one huge room, a combination of library and ministerial office, but Göring's actual study is quite a small room laid out as a tyrolese room in the best Gothic style. Here one can find books lying about which point to the German Air Minister's tastes and inclinations. Works on Nordic history, military science and tactics, aviation, travel and exploration, German history, and the classics are on bookshelf and table, all well thumbed. Staff conferences are held in the Map-room, and here portraits of Frederick the Great, von Moltke, and Napoleon give a meaning to the room and a sharp indication of its owner's tendencies.

Carin Hall must be the best-managed and most sociable house in Germany. The servants' accommodation is a model to all employers, and a real manorial atmosphere pervades the whole estate. In the house itself is a fully equipped cinema where master and employees each have their appointed seats as in the old churches of the lord of the manor. This is a real home, and Hermann Göring must feel that this is how Carin Göring would have wished to live.

On a brilliant June morning in 1934 General Hermann Göring stood at the church door of Lovoe. Before him stood a lead sarcophagus, emblazoned with the arms of the Göring and von Fock families, in which lay the plain white coffin containing the last remains of Carin Göring. Around Göring were his wife's relations, the staff of the German legation in Stockholm, and Prince and Princess Victor zu Weid, General Wecke of the Prussian police, and a handful of Swedish National Socialists, the officers and crew of a German torpedo-boat, and his adjutants. A simple religious service was held and the *cortège* moved away to the railway station, where the coffin was placed in a van lined with evergreens.

and spruce. The various wreaths and other floral tributes filled the van. A simple wreath of lilies and red roses bearing the inscription : 'To my only Carin,' rested at the foot of the coffin. The Swastika flag was placed over the coffin and a guard of Germans kept vigil by its side until the ferry reached Sassnitz in Germany. All the flags flew at half-mast; and from thence onward through the northern towns of Prussia great crowds paid homage and brought flowers.

Ultimately the coffin arrived at the great house in the Schorfheide, and in the presence of Adolf Hitler and members of the Government, Carin Göring reached her final rest in a rock-lined tomb by the lake-side in the grounds of Carin Hall. Amid the mournful strains of Wagner's funeral march Adolf Hitler placed his wreath upon the coffin of the woman who had helped to bring about the Third Empire; and who, in doing so, had died for it. There she rests to-day in the peace of the trees by the lake.

.

While Hermann Göring had been spending weeks over the organizing of the arrangement of his wife's reinterment in Germany, he was not unaware of the happenings among a mixed body of persons in the Reich. Day by day and hour by hour messages came to him of curious parties at which all conditions of men had something to say or to suggest. The second revolution was on the way. The conspirators met on a common platform, but they came from opposite camps, and through the peculiar blindness of their kind each section thought to use the other to put over its plans, and thus, having done so, to dispense with that section in the life of the new State. The Gestapo had notice hourly of the doings of this clique—its spies were everywhere. For quite six weeks before the storm broke, Göring in speeches up and down

Germany warned the conspirators of what they might expect if they insisted upon the carrying out of their plans. Many writers on German affairs have denied that any plots were being hatched at this time. How do they know, ensconced in their easy chairs in London and Paris. The conspiracy was in Germany, and every well-informed person in Germany knew of this loud secret. Conspirators are often a naïve set. These were. Moreover, they were often in their cups.

In May Göring went to Roehm and told him that the game was up, that he could not continue to kick against the Government; Roehm was told that National Socialism was going to pursue the course thought best by its leaders. Göring's advice was to forswear the ridiculous illusion of a real Socialist revolution and to work with the party in its modified programme. If this did not meet with Roehm's ideas, then he had better leave the country before settling day came, as come it surely would. To all these pleadings Roehm replied with denials that plots were being hatched, and continued to asseverate his loyalty to Hitler and the Government.

This proved to Göring the futility of reasoning. Action must be taken if the German Nation was not again to be in divided camps. For years he had struggled, by his own lights, to unite this troubled people, and he was not going to allow delicate feelings to stand in the way of maintaining control for his party over the people.

On 27 June Göring spoke to a mass meeting of over one million in the Cologne exhibition grounds, and he made passing reference to the trouble in the land. 'We will get even with these dealers in treason, for the German people think of nothing else now but the upholding of its valuable possession of unity. Let these traitors beware or suffer the consequences of their own folly.' That was plain enough, and Hitler in a speech on the same day reaffirmed Göring's intentions.

While Göring and Hitler were at a wedding-party of one of the Nazi district leaders in Essen, on the next day, messengers brought news from every corner of the Reich. The final message caused them both to leave the party without much leave-taking and to repair to a private room in the Kaiserhof Hotel in Essen to put the finishing touch to their plans.

Hitler proceeded to Bad Godesberg, while Göring returned to Berlin. Between the two, messages were passed by special courier, and on 29 June, Körner, a lifelong friend of Göring's and now Secretary of State in the Prussian Ministry, brought to Berlin Hitler's final orders. General Hermann Göring had been given supreme powers to purge the Reich of all disaffected elements.

Just before noon on Saturday, 30 June, Göring, the Minister of War, Baron von Blomberg, the supreme chief of the S.S., Heinrich Himmler, and Police-Generals Daleuge and Wecke, went into final conference, and an hour later the world awoke to the news of the blood bath.

In Berlin and Munich the purge had been complete. Hundreds were killed and thousands were under arrest. The German equivalent of 'Pride's Purge' was over just as efficiently and just as quickly. The Cromwellian tactics had been emulated completely, to the final point, with every 't' crossed.

Within a few months Hitler was to be faced with the final problem of revolution that had so disturbed the mind of Oliver Cromwell.

'What if a man should take it upon himself to be king,' and like Oliver, he rejected the crown idea for the Lord Protectorship, which promised to bear less heavily upon the neck.

A list of the dead and arrested persons disclosed quite a mixed 'bag.' The Junkers had suffered more than the self-appointed proletarian liberators of the German

242 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY
people. Roehm, Ernst, and Heines had been disposed of ; all were dead, and von Kahr of the Munich ' Putsch ' paid for his backsliding with his life. General von Schleicher and his wife were killed ' resisting arrest ' by the S.S. men, and then came a surprising array of old Prussian names, von Medem, von Hohberg, von Bredow, von Detten, von Beulwitz, von Krumhaar, von Wechmar, and von Heiderbreck, to mention just a few. Vice-Chancellor von Papen escaped the shooting only through the timely intervention of an ordinary Reichswehr soldier, who apparently had not received notification of the names of the proposed victims or else had thought that the Vice-Chancellor was above treason against the State. Many notable persons escaped the purge and fled abroad, most of these were ex-officials and junior ministers in previous Social Democratic Governments. Von Papen saw that his bluff was called, that the Nazi State had become fairly permanent, and he immediately made his peace with the Government, resigned his office, and was sent into the wilderness of the German Embassy in Vienna, where he has since made good his slip from grace. The Presidential blessing of this bloody undertaking was given in a telegram :

TO MINISTER PRESIDENT-GENERAL OF INFANTRY GÖRING,
BERLIN,

2.7.34.

For your energetic and successful action in the suppression of the revolt I send you my thanks and my appreciation.

With comradely thanks and greetings,

VON HINDENBURG.

Göring had carried out his threat of a year ago. He had not forgotten the Tempelhofer Feld demonstration. He had at last convinced Hitler of the need for drastic action, and his ruthlessness was now sanctioned by the Field-Marshal, which set the final seal to its legality. The tribune of the people had fulfilled its function.

A few weeks later, on 2 August, 'Papa' Hindenburg, as he was affectionately known to millions of the German people, passed out of the grip of disturbing German politics. He had run his race and had died in harness, exactly twenty years after the outbreak of that Great War in which he was to play so great a part and yet achieve so little. His last will exhorted the German people to stand resolutely behind Adolf Hitler and his Government and through that to see that German unity was maintained. The document also reminded the German Nation that the true guardian of the State was the Reichswehr and '... its lofty mission must be put to good account.'

Upon the passing of Hindenburg, Adolf Hitler by decree assumed the office of President, which was merged in that of the Chancellorship. The title of President had been dispensed with and Hitler became known as the 'Leader and Chancellor of the German Empire,' with autonomous power to appoint his own delegates and representatives.

The Third Reich had now arrived in all its power. The revolution was really over, and there was no authority in the land other than Hitler's. From this fateful date, 2 August 1934, the German people moved steadily forward to its destiny—greatness or oblivion. With the assumption of sovereign power by Hitler, Göring became his chief executive and his *alter ego*. To no man does Hitler owe greater thanks and loyalty, and he can expect from no other man more steadfast trust and service.

From the death of Hindenburg onwards Germany appeared as Germany. It was not the question of the National Socialist party ruling a country against its will. By the truculence of the Hitler regime and its full-blooded attitude to foreign problems, the people became obsessed with the idea of a new greatness. Germany had been

great ; it would be great again. Every move made in opposition to clauses of the Treaties was applauded by the people until Hitler, to the great majority, was the 'people's Chancellor,' and a worthy successor to Bismarck. The wheel of fate has turned whole circle and the German Nation is back again to a position, stronger possibly than in 1914.

In January 1935, by tremendous vote, the Saar became again German. March saw the public avowal of Germany's air rearmament. In two years, General Hermann Göring had, in secret, built an air force, which Adolf Hitler himself told Sir John Simon, during his fruitless visit to Berlin in March 1935, had reached parity with the R.A.F. In the same month Hitler introduced universal conscription throughout the German Reich. The Treaty of Versailles was being torn up, page by page, as had been promised—and the ex-allied nations said nothing, for they were fully conscious of their own iniquities. On 7 March 1936 Hitler announced that Germany again reminded the world that it was a sovereign State and proceeded to march Reichswehr troops into the demilitarized zone in the Rhineland. To this action the German electorate voted its complete support by polling 44,411,911 mandates when it was asked to say if it was content with the leadership of Hitler and his movement on 29 March.

From thence onward Germany dominated European politics. The old days of power politics were back. The Macht Politik of Bismarck dominated the mind and ruled the actions of Germany's rulers.

The attitude of foreign nations enforced upon Germany a policy of self-sufficiency which, if a world-trade slump comes, will have proved a contributory factor. To meet this need of self-sufficiency, the four-year plan was introduced with General Hermann Göring at the helm—the soldier turned economic dictator. Foreign loans

became impossible and appeals were made to the German people on issues of internal Government loans, and the nation which borrowed so lavishly from England and America between 1922-1928, in three years of Nazi rule subscribed no less than 10,558,600,000 marks. An interesting point to note in regard to Germany's financial resources is that her total loan indebtedness at the end of March 1938 was given officially as 19,700 million mark, of which the above figure from her own citizens has been raised since 1934, so that Germany has expended more on rearmament and public works under its National Socialist Government than under the whole period of Social Democrat rule since 1919.

An anti-Bolshevist pact was signed between Germany, Japan, and Italy, and other nations were invited to join in the crusade. Several smaller nations did, but these were nations having serious Communist elements in the people.

An adventure in Spain was carried out, and in February 1938 a purge took place in the army section of German life, resulting in the dethronement of Baron von Blomberg, the War Minister, General von Fritsch,¹ the chief of Army direction, and many senior General officers. Hitler assumed what he had previously rejected, the supreme command of all Germany's armed forces. In him was knitted the whole military, party, economic, and national authority of Germany. In effect Hitler was now War Minister, but actually not. General Hermann Göring was promoted Field-Marshal, thus becoming the senior

¹ Among other charges, it was at the time alleged that General von Fritsch had conspired with foreign military circles. He demanded the right to clear himself before a Court of Honour, which was granted, Field-Marshal Göring presiding. This court decided that all charges brought against him were unfounded and on the court's promulgation of its findings Hitler sent him a personal letter of goodwill. On 15 June of this year Hitler, as supreme Commander-in-Chief of Germany's Armed Forces, appointed von Fritsch to be honorary Colonel-in-Chief of the 12th Artillery Regiment at Schwerin.

officer of Germany's armed forces, for there was no other Marshal on the active list. Göring retained the command of the Air Force, but General of the Air Force Milch took over executive direction.

In the place of a War Minister the post of Chief of the Supreme Command (Chief of Staff) was created, and its first occupant is General Keitel. To co-ordinate national control a new Privy Cabinet Council was brought into existence and its chief function is to be the adviser to Hitler on all matters affecting the reaction of his personal policy to the interests of the State. Its composition is interesting :

Baron von Neurath (President).

Herr von Ribbentrop (Foreign Secretary).

Field-Marshal Göring.

Herr Rodolf Hess (Herr Hitler's deputy leader of the Nazi party. Not to be confused with Göring's office).

Dr. Joseph Goebbels (Propaganda Minister).

Dr. Heinrich Lammers (Chief of the Chancellory).

General Walter von Brauchitsch.

Admiral Erich Raeder (Commander-in-Chief of the Navy.)

General Wilhelm Keitel.

It will be noticed that it is a soldiers' council, and in it Field-Marshal Göring's many offices plus his military seniority commands the loudest voice. Before this General-post took place in Germany's affairs of State, Adolf Hitler instructed Göring to parade before him more than fifty Generals, who were then told that no further opposition to his Government's wishes by the Army inner circle would be tolerated. Thus ended the illusion, held for five years, that the Reichswehr held Hitler and his Ministers as hostages to its policy. He had swallowed them and their policy. He had rearmed Germany and the Reichswehr had been his instrument.

A month later Germany annexed Austria. This was

either a gigantic bluff by Hitler in an attempt to achieve a spectacular *coup* to freshen his laurels, or the whole German Nation really stands solidly behind him and his Government.

Fresh from its Austrian adventure, the German Government began to complain that the German-speaking section of Czechoslovakia, the Sudeten Deutschen, was being denied rights, and it asserted that it would protect every German minority beyond the present borders of the Reich. Propaganda began to spread the idea of the need for the return of the Italian Tyrol to the Reich, for Eupen and Malmedy and for Alsace to become again German. All these things point to a wish for complete unity among the German peoples, and that wish is fostered by the knowledge that strong men are at the helm to convert it into reality.

PRIME MINISTER OF PRUSSIA, MASTER OF
THE GERMAN FORESTS, CONTROLLER OF
THE GERMAN HUNT AND CONTROLLER
OF THE STATE THEATRES AND OPERA
HOUSES

FROM March 1933 until March of the following year Hermann Göring controlled the destinies of Prussia through the Ministry of the Interior, which Ministry in every German State was the chief instrument of the executive. It has been shown with what severity he purged the State of non-Nazi elements, every key office being filled by an official whose record over the years proved him to be an ardent National Socialist, either openly or covertly.* By March of 1934 this reorganization had become complete and, in conformity with the assimilation laws, the Ministry of the Interior of Prussia was merged in that of the Ministry of the Interior of the Reich, which was at the time, and remains, in the hands of Dr. Wilhelm Frick.

The attention of the Prussian Prime Minister was then focused on the real work of administration.

The election promises to cure unemployment had to be redeemed, and Germany's export trade was not large enough to absorb any of the unemployed into the factories in the industrial districts. Vast schemes of public work then sprang up and every German and foreigner became amazed by the energy with which Göring threw himself into the supervision of this work, as the chief representative of the German Chancellor. His comprehension

of the multiplicity of schemes was startling. He hammered home his point of view on engineers, architects, and industrialists, and in hundreds of mass meetings throughout Germany he spoke to the work-people, whipping up their enthusiasm into a foment which made collaboration with master and man much easier.

Many of these schemes serve dual purposes, such as the new motor-roads; they become the life-stream of German industry in peace, and in war they would facilitate the easy passage of mechanized forces from one sector of the Reich to another, in which danger threatened or reinforcement was needed. The achievement of the Dutch around the Zuider Zee was copied and improved upon, and vast tracts of land along the Fresian and Holstein coasts were reclaimed from the sea. For centuries, at certain periods of the year, much damage was done by sea encroachment. Koogs,¹ or sea walls were built, which prevented this encroachment and the land enclosed has now become utilized for cultivation.

A policy of State-aided building was put into operation and small houses sprang up all over Germany, each surrounded by their own vegetable plot. The overcrowding in flat dwellings was discouraged, and this small proprietorship proved a strong impetus to the natural breaking away from the idea of industrial or town socialism.

The practice of Polish seasonal farm labour being imported during the harvesting seasons ceased, and men from the labour service (which had absorbed much of the non-technical unemployed) were drafted on to the farms. Women holding responsible positions in offices, factories, and workshops were dismissed to make way for men in accordance with the concept of the National Socialist State.

Throughout Germany new airports sprang up and

¹ One of these Koogs has been named 'Hermann Göring Koog.'

each medium-sized town was linked with the larger centres by a regular fast air-service. The use of the aeroplane for normal travel was encouraged by keeping the fare-schedules as low as possible. On some routes travel by air is no more expensive than by second-class on the railway.

Organizations for the relief of distress and suffering were co-ordinated, and those unemployed hitherto beyond the scope of the National unemployment funds were reasonably well provided for out of funds regularly collected by means of lottery and street and house-to-house appeals. This organization is known as the *Winterhilfe* (winter help); the winter being the worst days of unemployment and individual hardship in Germany, as in every other country.

Just before Christmas in any year in Berlin a most unusual sight can be witnessed. The Prussian Prime Minister, usually in his General's uniform, walks through the main thoroughfares of the city jingling his *Winterhilfe* collecting-box under the noses of the passers-by. This is a climax of a general collecting drive directed by him all over Germany. By his example he has encouraged all the Ministers, actors, singers, writers, and leaders of German social and cultural life to follow him with collecting-boxes. Of late years the need for sustenance for the unemployed is not so great, and yet, peculiarly enough, the amounts collected are higher than ever. After the aged and needy have received adequate treatment throughout the cold season, through such services as clothing, food and fuel, and small weekly money grants, as distinct from their small pensions or unemployment or welfare pay, the balance of the money is used at Christmas time for children's parties and toys.

Göring has always held a strong view on the giving of presents to children. As a youngster himself one Christmas he received a new suit of clothes in lieu of a more

attractive present. "Why," he told a boy friend, "I would have had to have had a new suit anyhow." The picture of the German Air Minister surrounded by children of all ages at a Christmas festivity presents a pleasant change from his threats and sabre-rattling.

Another picture denied the world is Field-Marshal Göring playing trains with his young nephews, and on one occasion with Benito Mussolini, and on another with the Duke of Windsor, during their visits to Carin Hall as the German Air Minister's guests.¹

The rebuilding of the Berlin underground railway system occupies his personal interest. This work was commenced in 1934, and although the work is extremely difficult because of the sand over which the city is built, the reconstruction is keeping to the original time and cost schedule. This most amazing man seems to be always on the spot. In the summer of 1935, the weakening sand caused a considerable subsidence on the Tiergarten side of the Brandenburg Gate, accompanied by a heavy death-roll among the workers, who were entrapped and crushed. Within a few moments of the news of this disaster the Prime Minister of Prussia was on the spot directing the rescue operations; efficient as the Berlin fire brigades and ambulances are, he was ahead of them on time.

In his capacity of Prime Minister of Prussia it was also Göring's duty to supervise the administration of the laws relating to the commercial and cultural activities of the Jewish section of German life. When approached by some busybody, who was probably seeking preferment, wishing to convey to him the suggestion that Secretary of State Milch (now General of the Air Force) was not completely Aryan, Göring is reputed to have thundered :

¹ The whole upper part of the main block of the house in the Schorfheide, a sort of gigantic attic, is laid out as a miniature electric railway system, complete with villages, stations, signal boxes, goods yards and suitable cross-points. It is considered to be the finest in the world.

"I am the one in Germany who determines if a person is Jewish."

He saw to it that no Jew, artist or manager, received work through the theatrical exchanges, the Reich Film Chamber, the Association of German Journalists, the Bar Association, the Physicians', Surgeons' and Dentists' Societies. No Jewish doctor could retain panel patients and public assurance. Business, stockbroking, and banking was barred to the Jewish race for ever. Every University and lesser place of education was sedulously cleared of all Jewish or partially Jewish professors, lecturers, demonstrators, and teachers. The publishing, newspaper, and printing trades passed completely from Jewish control, and any book written by a Jew had to be either written in Hebrew, or if it was printed in German text, it had to be designated as a translation.

Field-Marshal Göring has himself admitted that the Jewish problem has not yet been completely solved. The German Institute for the study of the Jewish Problem in a recent report complains that the exodus of the Jew from Germany is not proceeding at a quick enough tempo: '... the unsatisfactory prospect remains that it will be thirty years before the last professing Jew will have left Germany, not to speak of those persons who are Jew by race only.' From which it appears that Göring's *bête noire* will follow him to the grave.

The introduction of the concentration camp as a factor in a modern political State came as a surprise to our so-called enlightened world. There is no doubt that in the first months of the National Socialist Revolution many quite harmless individuals found their way to these camps through personal vengeance on the part of those vested with too powerful authority to lay information and issue arrest warrants. These are the little Hitlers and Görings of the revolution, and since 1933 many of them have themselves received condign punishment and have

found lodgings in those places to which they had consigned their personal rivals or enemies.

The Government of the Third Reich has from time to time announced the amnesty and liberation of many thousands of prisoners from these camps. It has declared that many political prisoners have become converts to National Socialism after a due consideration of their past while in durance vile. Göring himself has said on many occasions that 'the main body of German people who supported the "System" was not wholly bad, it had merely been led astray by these people' (presumably the agitators and leaders of the Communist and Socialist parties).

A certain distinguished foreign visitor went to Hermann Göring with strong letters of introduction. He wished to see for himself the new Germany. "What do you want to see," said Göring, "would you care to visit one of the concentration camps?" "No thanks," replied the visitor, "I would rather be shown your new factories, your welfare schemes, and your beauty spots." "Good," rejoined the Prime Minister, "I am glad, for I don't like my prisoners looked at like animals in the Zoo."

The most intriguing of Hermann Göring's offices, the Master of the German Forests and the Master of the German Hunt, both of which have been merged into one *Amt* (office), is one that will appeal to every Englishman: the care of natural beauty and wild animal life. Behind the forestry post is an economic meaning, but the custodianship of the wild is an office which anyone could find pleasure in administering.

The old German tribes looked upon the forest as holy, and in one phase of history the oak particularly was worshipped as a God. In the Middle Ages the forests

and woods were common lands, and later, when taken over by the State, through fierce punishment in the late Middle Ages and legislation, as civilization came to the rulers, the natural forests of Germany were well preserved. But as the need for fuel was felt among the country-dwellers and civilization spread, bringing in its train the need for furniture and fuel for industry, the forests were plundered haphazardly for gain.

Of all the German rulers, Frederick the Great was the most enlightened in seeing the economic value of well-tended forests to the State, and he appointed a Minister of the Prussian Forests about 1769, with a fully staffed department, which was entrusted with care of the land and trees and the commercial exploitation of the timber. As Prussia expanded and became a commercial power, political and economic ignorance robbed the forests of their timber without due care to afforestation schemes. After a brief period of decline, new forestry laws were enacted which required owners of timber to plant quantity for quantity with that felled. During the Napoleonic wars woods and whole forests were sold and parcelled up, and with a division of ownership came a lack of care for land and standing timber.

Before Göring came to office the forestry control was, as in other things, in the hands of the various States. In 1933 he divested the Ministry of Agriculture and Nutrition of its authority over forests and formed a separate department: Lands and Forests. He issued an edict that in future economic need came before profit, and higher ideals were looked for from the owners of private woods. He saw that forestry and the timber and wood-working industry were inextricably bound up in each other as producer and consumer of the same raw material—interdependent—and that justifies his forcing a unified control on the latter also. The Reichs Forest Office was formed in 1934, as the result of the general *Gleichschaltung*

decree, and this meant that the whole forestry and timber affairs of Germany were now in the hands of the Prussian Prime Minister. As the head of this office he had standing as a Reichs Minister, which further increased his authority in the Cabinet. Since 1933 he had been the Master of the Reichs Hunting Union, and his first measure, on the formation of the Reichs Forest Ministry, was to merge all hunting organizations into the new Ministry.

By 1935 hundreds of thousands of the unemployed were working under the Forest Office, living in camps and specially erected hutments and barracks in the forest and heath districts of Germany. They were making roads, digging dikes and ditches, and were being instructed in woodcraft and lumbering. Most of these people had never known forests before; few had ever seen the country, but they very readily settled down, and within a year or two many have become quite craftsmen in wood-working.

Special attention was given to a scientific approach to the extermination of wood parasites. Between 1923-4, in Prussia alone, damage to standing timber in the State forests from the *Forleulenfrass* pest cost the Prussian Treasury over 700 million marks. To-day, aeroplanes, flying low over the trees, discharge chemical spray which penetrates the bark and exterminates all parasitical grub growth.

The German forest allocation from the National Budget is a substantial one. Much has been done to elevate the standard of living of the lower section of forestry workers—such as the junior wardens and the foresters themselves. Special grants have been made to families whose homes had fallen to a low standard owing to the small pay during the years of neglect of the forest service.

Officials with families are being gradually brought in

from the forests to posts nearer the villages in order that their children may more easily attend the local schools. Childless officials are being drafted to the more out-of-the-way posts to replace these families. The foresters are having new houses built for them with modern conveniences, yet designed in keeping with the surroundings. Each of these houses has about four acres of land and the families are encouraged to keep a few pigs and fowls.

With the change of seasons, camps are organized in different parts of Germany, and the foresters move from district to district in order to become acquainted with the different lumbering and other conditions, which vary according to the tradition of the locality. At these camps they also undergo courses of advanced instruction in woodcraft.

Immediately Göring took over control of the forests he instituted drastic regulations for the prevention of fires and decreed heavy punishments for negligence, smoking in the woods or bringing about risky conditions which would lead to a conflagration. Under this new law, an obligation is imposed upon everyone in the vicinity to help in fighting the fire, whether called upon to do so or not.

Great schemes of reafforestation are planned and, even now, more than 700 square miles of new trees have been planted in various parts of the Reich to replace that timber land which had to be cleared to make way for airports, new villages, and the new German motor roads. Irrigation schemes have been put in hand, which have become another means for absorbing the unemployed.

Hermann Göring sees a national asset in the German forests quite apart from their tradition and their æsthetic value. From wood pulp a variety of synthetic articles can be manufactured ; power to drive the internal combustion engine can also be liberated from wood, and timber is a necessity in war. Consequently, a new decree directs

that wood, in any condition, shall be conserved as much as possible. In the building and furniture trades, where wood was hitherto used, substitute material must be introduced wherever possible. Until 1934, 48 per cent of all timber felled in Germany was sold as fuel only. Through the introduction of new types of stoves, the use of peat and the introduction of bricquets, compressed from soft coal, into more general use, this figure has been considerably reduced.

In the preservation of beauty spots throughout the Reich, with the attendant care for special ferns, bushes, and trees, until now in danger of becoming extinct, and with the preservation of wild animal life in moorland, hill, and marshland, Göring has ensured for all time the naturalness of the country and has given an added attraction to the visitor to Germany. The rapidly dying-out fish eagle, the elk, the bison, and the wild boar are now being protected by special laws. The wild white swan will soon be seen again in large flocks by the lakesides of Germany, and the deer and stag will roam the forest glade. Wild horses have been imported and are breeding in the Schorfheide, that large tract of forest, heath, moor, marshland, and lakeland which extends from the north of Berlin eastwards to the Polish Corridor and northwards to the Baltic coast. The peninsula of Darss, on the Pomeranian coast, has its forest, which is almost primeval in its grandeur and density, preserved from exploitation under the new forest laws.

Rominter Heide (Heath), the most easterly outpost of the German Reich, where the elk previously thrived but which now is almost extinct, is another protected tract of forest land. The few remaining elk bulls and cows are now carefully tended and some of the younger ones have been transferred to the Schorfheide. Hermann Göring tried two experiments, unsuccessfully, in 1934 and 1935. He first imported elk from Sweden, with a view to their

breeding in the Schorfheide, but the climate proved unsuitable, for their antlers withered, their bodies became stunted, and, generally in bad condition, they failed to breed; some died, while the remainder had to be slaughtered to save them suffering. A new consignment came from Canada, but this second experiment proved fruitless. So the idea of removing some of the surviving elk from the Rominter to the Schorfheide was hit upon and put into effect at once. In 1935, the first elk calf was born in the Schorfheide, and now there are over forty perfectly developed elk in this forest. Bison were imported from Sweden for a similar experiment, and this time the move proved successful, due, in all probability, to the greater power of endurance of this heavier animal.

The hunting laws in Germany have been thoroughly overhauled and tightened up. No huntsman can obtain a licence or rent or own a hunt until he can prove, to the satisfaction of the local head of the hunting registration office, that he can really shoot. No private hunt or shoot-owner can go out to-day with a party of guns and shoot as much of his game as he likes. Hunting for business has been stopped. The quota of game for each hunt or shoot has been fixed. From now onward the trophy of the chase has to be the true pride and aim of the hunter. (Before National Socialist Germany, according to the new regulations, a hunting day must have been somewhat akin to a local butcher's slaughtering day.)

Hermann Göring is almost as fanatical about the care of animals as he is over his detestation of the Jews. Some years ago a huntsman brought into Carin Hall a deer kid which was ailing. He cared for it himself for weeks, and it has now become attached to his household, side by side with the young lion which he reared from a cub and which behaves like a normal house-dog. In 1934, Göring used to have his food sent in from a famous grill off Unter den Linden. On one occasion the regular

waiter, who had become accustomed to the lion-cub, was off duty, and a young waiter, who did not know of the existence of the jungle pet in the Prime Minister's rooms, carried the tray round to the Ministry. On passing through the door into the room in which the tray was to be set he saw the lion, dropped the tray and ran for his life. It is not on record, but it is quite likely that Hermann Göring, robbed of his lunch, roared louder than the lion.

A law prohibiting vivisection was passed early in Göring's tenure of office, and at the meeting at which he made the law known he said: "People who torture animals insult the feelings of the German people." This anti-vivisection law brought over to his side many of those in foreign countries who, until then, had been his worst slanderers. The hunting laws of the Third Reich are in general keeping with this tone—cruelty to animals is to be suppressed and punished with the utmost severity. The hunt with horse and hounds is now abolished in Germany. The hunter must stalk on foot. Every huntsman must now own a retriever type of dog in order that, in the case of a faulty shot, the dog may pick out or retrieve the quarry, so that the hunter can give it a death-blow and thus prevent it escaping in an injured condition to either die in a hole or be the prey of other animals of the woods.

The cruel type of claw and wire trap has now been abolished by law, and the use of artificial lights to attract a quarry is forbidden in Germany. The use of poison in places frequented, or likely to be frequented, by animals is also prohibited.

Göring has led an attack on the false romance which surrounds poachers. He points out the number of game-keepers and foresters killed every year in nightly affrays with poachers, and he has stamped the practice of poaching out in Germany as ruthlessly as he destroyed the Communists in the towns.

Since the winter of 1934 all hunters in Germany contribute, each year, all game shot between the 9th and 15th December to the Winter Help Association.⁴

The falcon, as the symbol of chivalry, has been placed under special protection in the German woods and forests. The art or sport of falconry has been reintroduced and is governed by the Falcon Order. Severe punishment falls upon those who injure or kill eagles, because of this bird's association with the symbol of the German Reich.

.

At the time the National Socialist Government took the reins in Germany the theatre had fallen to a low standard in morals. Lewd revues had swept away the legitimate play and those plays which were presented were weak in plot and action. The erotic held Berlin in its grip. The whole entertainment world, from theatre to cabaret, advertised that it led the world in debauched ideas. One guide to Berlin openly asserted that the night life of Paris and Levantine ports could not offer the 'attractions' that certain specified haunts in Berlin could promise.

Homosexuality was openly rampant and a large proportion of German womanhood also practised unnatural vices in the haunts provided. The much vaunted *Nackt Kultur* clubs and associations (nudist clubs) were, as to 80 per cent, run on dishonest principles. The photographs taken of club members were printed off in their thousands and sent abroad, to be sold, in discreetly packed parcels, in such spots as Piccadilly and Broadway after dark. A large number of so-called film producers were specialists in the production of pornographic films for public exhibition in Balkan, Eastern, and South American resorts, and for private sale in the more 'civilized' communities.

So when the political purge came in Prussia, and later

in the Reich, an 'artistic' cleansing accompanied it. But in this, as in all other German movements, cleansing was blindly carried out, and some things that were good in art disappeared. The purge, as Alf would say, was 'too blooming 'olesale.' Through the intervening years, however, a return to normal has shown itself, and the display of the female body is assuming its tasteful place in the German cinema and theatre.

When Göring assumed control of the German theatre life he did a wise thing. He called to his Ministry the real leaders of the German theatre, opera, cinema, and music world, and asked for their advice and support. Men, whose names are known internationally, were regular visitors, and Furtwängler, Jannings, Gründgens, Kraus, and Tiedjen were particularly helpful in guiding the new controller of the German theatres along right lines.

He attended theatres and the opera almost every night of the week. His political collaborators shook their heads and muttered something about play-acting. Göring rounded on them and told them to look into their own duties a little more thoroughly, for only by studying the task can one effectively discharge an office. He spoke with impresarios, artists, high and low, scene-shifters, electricians, door-keepers, and advertising directors. He explored every possibility. He announced his intention to dispense with the star system. He pointed out that an actor or actress who was undoubtedly good would naturally continue to be placed at the head of the cast, but not because the part itself was considerable. A small part excellently portrayed was to be suitably recognized. 'Break with the star system,' he told producers, four years before Mr. Alexander Korda announced his *obiter dicta* that the pursuance of such a policy was the only salvation of the British film industry, 'seek, sift, and explore for new material.'

Not only the State theatres and opera houses benefited by Göring's control. He has proved himself (through the Reichs Treasury) to be a most prolific patron of the arts. Small theatres, in danger of extinction, were given grants in aid to redress the stage, recondition seating, and to put on new plays.

This work naturally brought him into close association with many actresses and singers, and, during 1934, his name was coupled with several German beauties. The opera singer, Margarete von Schirach, sister of Baldur von Schirach, the leader of the Hitler Youth Movement, was rumoured, in foreign circles in Berlin, as being engaged to marry Göring. Name after name kept cropping up until, in the spring of 1935, it was officially announced that he was to marry Emmy Sonnemann, a talented actress of considerable charm and quiet beauty. The wedding took place shortly afterwards in the Dom, the Protestant cathedral church of the Reich, in the presence of the members of the Government, leaders of the National Socialist party, German society, and the Foreign Diplomatic Corps, with Adolf Hitler officiating as best man and official witness.

Again a woman was to play a strong part in Hermann Göring's life. He entered into his task of supervising the theatre with greater vigour than before, for in his wife he had a powerful ally. She knew everybody in the theatre world and she knew just who and what required assistance. Within a short while the Emmy Göring Home for aged and indigent artists was inaugurated, and other similar institutions were saved from closing their doors by subsidies from the Prussian Ministry of State.

Frau Emmy Göring is an actress who, before her marriage, achieved recognition entirely on her histrionic ability. For years she was a humble 'prentice in the school of the small theatre. Hamburg, Weimar, Munich, Cologne, and Vienna knew her before Berlin took her to

its heart. At last, in Berlin, she turned to the classic drama of Shakespeare, Goethe, and Schiller. Her portrayals of Portia were in the best Shakespearian tradition, while her film work was of a high order. In the film *Wilhelm Tell* she played the part of Tell's wife with a proper measure of womanly fortitude and sacrifice. Despite the studio atmosphere she was able to convey faithfully the spirit of the twelfth century.

Of greater interest to English theatre-goers is the fact that she created 'Victoria' in Bruno Frank's *Sturm im Wasserglas*, produced in London in 1935 under the title *Storm in a Tea-cup*, and filmed by an English company in 1937. Göring's present wife has become a figure in national life. The people admire her as much as her husband. In a State where the head is a bachelor much of the official hostess' duties have fallen upon her shoulders. The associations which she has brought into the life of the Prussian Prime Minister have directed his energies more keenly than ever into the cult of the traditional and artistic. Some little while ago he acquired, on behalf of the Prussian Ministry of State with a grant from the Treasury, the Guelph collection of treasures, State ornaments, and armour, which, after the break-up of the kingdom of Hanover in 1837, had been drifting about from dealer to dealer until they came into the possession of a syndicate of art dealers, from whom Göring purchased them. During the International Hunting Exhibition in Berlin in 1937 these treasures were on view in the Berlin Castle, which, once the metropolitan home of the Hohenzollern, is now a State museum. The Prussian Prime Minister has an inordinate interest in ancient relics of empire and kingship. While on a private visit to Vienna in 1936 one of his first calls was at the Imperial Treasury to look upon the ancient crown and insignia of Charlemagne. These relics are symbols of Germanic power and glory of the First

264 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY
Empire, founded by Charlemagne on Christmas Day
800.

That a strong guard of honour, composed of S.S. men, was set over these relics, in the Imperial Treasury in Vienna, immediately upon the *Anschluss*, is a further indication of Göring's interest. Perhaps one day he expects to see the splendid ceremony of crowning and enthronization, which is the basis of the English coronation ritual, re-enacted in the cathedral in Aachen.

While the supervision of the museums, art galleries, and the general conduct of art generally, is nominally in the hands of the Ministers of the Interior and of Education, Field-Marshal Göring has made it his business to exercise a rigid supervision over their views on these subjects. Hardly a week goes by but he is to be found speaking in this or that museum or officially opening exhibitions of German art in one city or another. Skilled in the use of propaganda, he knows that any speech he makes in such an environment will be adequately reported in the foreign Press. Some of his most momentous utterances have reached the outside world through this media.

He has become a liberal patron of art. At Kronenburg, in the Eifel mountains, the 'Hermann Göring Master School of Painting' has been founded and placed under his personal patronage. This school provides, it is claimed, a new ethical foundation for German painting, and it seeks to serve the German people by producing a national art without regard to material profit. Twelve promising young German artists will receive a complete post-graduate course of three years and will base their standard of values on the works of the great masters, 'with due regard to the individual expression of the present time.'

The Field-Marshal, at the opening ceremony, reminded his listeners that the great German masters in the past

had had their own schools, in which they imparted their own knowledge to young artists. It had remained for the Third Reich to revive this system, which would be practised in the Hermann Göring School, since art was a mission calling for fanatical devotion.

268 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

the hands of the French, and remained with them, in jail, until the Prussians effected their liberation by the payment of a considerable sum in French currency as ransom. So some of his much-hoarded 'foreign exchange' had to go to bring 'raw materials' back to Prussia.

Frederick presented this Göring with a special sword of honour, which the present-day Commissarius Loci hangs among his collection of family heirlooms.

In the spring of 1936 Adolf Hitler announced that he was working on plans to make Germany independent, economically, of foreign countries. He tucked himself away in his mountain home and conferred with economists, bankers, and the leaders of the various sections of national life. In the autumn of the same year it was announced, by the German official Press bureau; that General Hermann Göring would be placed in autocratic control of this plan for self-sufficiency, which was to be known as the Four Year Plan.

This placed Göring above the President of the Reichsbank and the Reich Minister of Economics. In fact, every Ministry having a bearing on the national economy was subordinated to the will, for good or evil, of the new Commissioner of the Four Year Plan. Bankers remonstrated that a soldier should be in charge of such a scheme, in which a slight mistake in policy could have far-reaching effects. Industrialists groaned and thought in terms of higher taxation to pay for this 'folly.' The masses, not interested in profits, but in work, upon hearing of the plan, visualized new factories and pay day. They had forgotten the Amerikanische Wirtschaftswunder. Göring dealt summarily with the bankers and the industrialists, and appealed to the people for their most active support. The resignations and dismissals followed as the natural sequence to any new appointment of the Prussian Prime Minister. 'No grumblers here,' was his thundered threat.

The slogan of the Four Year Plan is : ' National weal before private weal.' The leitmotif is a continuing appeal for sacrifice.—Sacrifice by the individual that the nation may become economically strong and free from relying upon international finance and trade. This continued insistence upon the need for sacrifice is a glorious opportunity for the German Government to drive home to the people the need for colonies and Germany's own source of natural raw materials. ' They have robbed us of our colonies,' Göring has said many, many times, ' which would give us our raw materials and, meanwhile, they are swimming in an abundance of the world's products.'

A few months after the plan was put into operation the importation of foreign fats became curtailed, because the foreign currency was required to pay for the import of other more essential materials, to facilitate the working of the industrial side of the plan. To put a stop to incipient grumbling Göring addressed the nation over the radio. ' You must choose between butter or guns,' he declared. ' Germany must arm to assert itself.'

Conscious of the fact that many were shaking their heads at his economic control of the nation, he called a meeting of the leading industrialists and gave them his reasons why he accepted the post.

' My occupation is not economy. I have never been a managing director or a chairman and I do not think that I shall ever be. I am no farmer. I have never grown more than a few flower-pots on the balcony. But I am ready, with all my heart and soul, and strong in the belief of the greatness of the German people, to throw in my lot with this people and this tremendous work.'

The section of German life to benefit first under the plan was the agricultural community. Grants were made for the replacement of implements, better buildings, and more capacious storage accommodation. Chemical fertilizers were delivered by the German Chemical Trust on

long-credit terms guaranteed by the bureau of the Four Year Plan. This had the effect of an increase in spending in all departments of life, the benefits being passed on. Expert advice was given on the more scientific care of crops and animals, which at first the German farmer, like his brothers of the land in every country, resented. Upon hearing of this resentment Göring told them bluntly that any benefits passed on to them from his Ministry was not to help them, but the nation, whose instruments they were. He reminded them that a healthy agricultural community means a prosperous nation.

In the early days of the plan the German newspapers were filled with paragraphs about, and photographs of, the Commissioner of the plan. For months he visited every section of Germany where industry was concentrated; he was photographed going down mines, intently gazing at some mechanical device in engineering works, and inspecting assembled plant ready for delivery to the consumer. Some wag circulated the story that while passing, in full uniform and decorations, beneath a magnetic grab in Krupps' works he was lifted bodily by it from the ground.

Angered beyond measure, on one occasion, with a committee set up to advise on a section of work under the plan, he burst out: 'Perhaps you gentlemen will put your heads together and follow my orders to make the things possible without grumbling.'

Germany to-day is an inventor's paradise. Any man with a reasonable sounding idea is immediately assisted, but controlled, with money, assistants, workshops, and laboratories. Many of the inventions taken up and operated commercially are patents based on cellulose treatments. A variety of synthetic materials have sprung out of wood in this way, and that has given rise to the joke about the shipwreck in which the only survivor was a German because he was wearing a suit made from wood.

The German used to be a little sensitive when spoken to by a foreigner about *ersatz* materials, but now he has come to accept the situation and to be proud of the achievement of his industry in supplying so many substitutes for the natural article, the import of which would cost good *Devisen*, which is required for higher and better things. The German housewife points to the little docket on newly purchased household linen which says that these articles must not be washed in hot water which reaches boiling-point ; if they were, the articles would simply return to a sort of wood pulp, because the chemical action which was responsible for their manufacture was being partially repeated. Hans, the German workman, is surprised, when calling upon his local outfitter to buy his new winter 'woollies,' at being offered, instead, artificial silk underwear at prices distinctly lower than his more homely garments. But once he has worn these substitutes he feels quite the little gentleman and blesses 'our Hermann' for his Four Year Plan.

Grumbling still goes on in the Reich, but it is trodden on wherever it leads to obstruction. If no grumbling was heard life would be very humdrum, for the 'grouzers' supply the fuel for Göring's ire, the explosion of which appears to drive him onward. It is said, in Berlin, that his adjutants inquire of Robert, Göring's manservant, each morning, in what temper they may expect to find their chief.

Göring has found in the Four Year Plan another weapon against the Jews. He issued a decree compelling all Jews to declare their property in excess of 5000 marks, at home or abroad. The Commissioner is then empowered to take the necessary measures to ensure that the capital so declared is used in accordance with the best interest and requirements of German industry and business. This declaration had previously been made in common with that demanded from Aryan Germans. What it really gives to the German Government is a complete list

of Jewish fortunes, which may have been partially concealed before. Failure to comply with the decree or attempted concealment or fraudulent conveyance to Aryan 'dummies' will be punished by long terms of imprisonment and heavy fines.

Confiscation seems to be the ultimate aim of this decree; but the writer has reason to believe that no out-and-out plan of confiscation will be adopted, but that Jewish capital will be compelled to subscribe for shares in the national undertakings operated by the Four Year Plan. Göring intends that this decree shall apply to all Jews having property or fortune in Germany, irrespective of nationality, but if this policy is persisted in it will raise problems far-reaching in their effect. It would be contested, rightly, that such action would contravene consular and diplomatic rights and treaties of friendship, but the Commissioner will have his reply ready. 'The Jews are a race of their own. They are not German, English, American or any nationality—they are Jews.' The main ideological object of this decree is to unearth the 'camouflaged' Jew, who wields great influence in German economy, and to establish, finally, who and who is not Aryan.

The formation of a great national undertaking in connection with the Four Year Plan caused a fluttering in the dovecots, in Germany and in England and America. The Reichswerke Hermann Göring A.G. was founded, and its object included the management and control of iron and steel works and deposits. English and American shareholders in the great German steel combine and other heavy industries jumped to the conclusion that the State was about to swallow them. Instead, this company exists to operate those semi-worked-out deposits of ore in various parts of Germany which industry and finance has considered unremunerative and which have been closed down for years. The Reichswerke Hermann Göring A.G. will, *inter alia*, operate these deposits and

it is quite possible that the Commissioner has his eye on the Jewish money, declared under the above-mentioned decree, as a means to finance this work. Fear of this eventuality has undoubtedly quickened the exodus of the Jews from Germany as fast as financial regulations in the Reich will allow and as hospitable countries can accommodate them.

Since the *Anschluss* with Austria, under the cover of the Four Year Plan, 'better and bigger' drives are being made against German Jewry. In Austria it is more intense than in Germany, because of the fact that many Jews left Germany and settled in Vienna.

A new anti-Jewish law has for some while been foreshadowed in Berlin, which, if actually put into operation, will prevent Jews from acquiring German nationality (*Staatsangehörigkeit*) by birth, marriage, or naturalization. Children born of Jewish parents will not be recognized as German citizens and will thereby be stateless.

The Commissioner of the Four Year Plan was, for some while in May, in Austria, supervising the application of the plan to the economic life of what has now become the Ostmark of Gross Deutschland. At Linz he laid the foundation of the Austrian branch of the Reichswerke Hermann Göring A.G. which will operate the Styrian ore deposits, reputed to contain over 500,000 tons of ore, and in his ceremonial address he belaboured the Austrians for their easy-going natures. He told them that they must not suppose that union with Germany was going to be all beer and skittles. They were not to assume that the old Reich proposed to make their bed for them in order that they might rest. They must give the lie to the tradition of Austrian joviality. That was all very well, but during working hours it became laziness. They must strive to show that workers in the Ostmark could work just as hard as workers in the Reich. The whole ore-fields of Styria were of vast importance to his

Four Year Plan, he told the workers. No metal was more important than iron. Field-Marshal Göring then made one of his aphoristic remarks: "Men trade with gold, but iron ensures the freedom of the nation. It is, of course, a fine thing to possess gold as well, but all the gold in the world is useless if there is no iron to guard and protect."

The operation of the Four Year Plan has had the desired effect on German economy. Imports have been reduced and the preparation of substitutes, therefore, at home has resulted in countless numbers of new factories being built and workpeople occupying them. Unemployment in Germany is negligible and every trade has benefited. The Reichs Labour Exchange and Unemployment Insurance Office, in a recent report (May), stated that activity in almost all branches of industry remained at a high level and that the demand for labour was far above the supply. The demand for skilled labour is now being met largely by the various industries taking on unskilled workers and training them.

In the early years National Socialist policy precluded women from doing work which kept men out of employment. To-day a complete reversal of that policy is in operation. Married women even are encouraged to take employment in industry, and homes are being built, staffed by trained nurses, in which married women may leave their children while they themselves are at work in the factories.

The world is too prone to smirk at organized national effort. It laughed at the Russian experiment; it is still laughing at the German plan. The laugh is beginning to disappear, at least in England, where questions are being asked in Parliament, over the 'dumping' of German motor cars and other products, competing keenly with our own manufactures.

THE GERMAN AIR MINISTER

FOR some years before 1933 German youth became intensely interested in flying, for its own sake, and stirred by a certain propaganda into a hope that their knowledge of aviation would later be utilized, in an organized manner, should a National Socialist Government come to power. A mass enthusiasm for aeronautics in every branch had thus been created.

All the great pilots of the war years had sedulously hung together, and their point of meeting was the Flugverbandshaus in Berlin. In such journals as the *Deutsche Wehr* (German Defence), *Die Luftwacht* (The Air Watch), and others having similar scope, articles appeared which had been extracted and translated from the leading foreign air and military journals on technical matters dealing with aviation and its progress, so that Germany was always abreast of improvements. The commentary on these articles proved the possession of aeronautical knowledge by the extractor and translator very often superior to the writer of the original article. Denied a military air force, and consequently any organization that resembled a territorial air unit, the university students banded themselves together in flying clubs, but there was always at least one skilled pilot in the group, who was either an ex-Air Force officer or one who had served in the military air force of some foreign Power. Gliding clubs became fashionable in Germany long before they were organized to any great extent in England, and the manipulation of gliders in flight proved an admirable (if not a necessary) foundation for training later in power aircraft.

276 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

The achievements of the new Zeppelin airships were looked upon with great pride by the youth of Germany, and a new generation grew up—a race of sky-birds.

The air pilot in Germany, to-day, is held up as the personification of the ideal German man. He is pointed to as the natural successor of the pre-1914 officer. Every boy wishes to be a pilot because he feels that he is master of the elements. The generation which knew not war listens to the exploits of famous German airmen on the Western front, and by them are inspired with a tradition equal to that of our own.

The German Air Force is the *élite* of the fighting services, and its sky-blue uniform is to be seen in every street, café, and public meeting-place in Germany. From the enthusiastic nucleus of the flying clubs in 1933, now, in 1938, a race of airmen has been trained and co-ordinated for service. One thing is particularly noticeable about the new German Air Force. Unless the organization is overhauled it will never possess the spirit of chivalry of the old Great War days. The writer has found in the older men, the senior officers, all of whom fought in the Great War, a spirit of comradeship with Englishmen. Göring, Loerzer, Udet, Bodenschatz, von Schlei, all display this feeling; but among the younger officers an intense nationalism blinds their real German tradition of hospitality, and they are obsessed by smouldering resentment. The older men are open, frank, and talk without reserve; while the youngsters are secretive even in normal conversation, and one receives the impression that they carry the whole responsibility of the new German Air Force on their young shoulders. These, too, may be different if they would really try to understand us.

In 1930 the National Socialist Flying Corps could be seen in the more outlandish districts of Germany. In aviation, as in all other things, the Nazis have left nothing to chance. For years every State organization was

planned by the leaders of the party. Just as an engineer works to a blue-print, so have the architects of the Third Reich had their plans continually before them. History will show that the Third Reich owed its birth as much to planning and patience as to tub-thumping and forceful politics.

Because of the rigid control exercised by the French, care was always taken by the supreme command of the S.A. (to which the National Socialist Flying Corps was attached) that all flying should be carried out in a manner which would not place the German Air Council in an awkward situation in its dealings with the Treaty Powers. Therefore, despite the fact that its Flying Corps units followed faithfully the traditional military formations, they had no observers (*Beobachter*). Instead, a title, *Flugzeugorter*,¹ was coined, and these functioned as observers.

Members of this National Socialist Flying Corps continued to wear the ordinary S.A. uniform according to their rank, and, in the case of ex-war pilots, the old Imperial Air Force stripes were worn. The flying units carried out periodical training, and gave demonstrations on specially arranged flying days.

Ever since 1933 the German Air Ministry has organized a National Flying Day in summer, in Berlin and main centres. An annual *Deutschland Flug* (Flight round Germany) attracts many keen airmen.

When the flying clubs of Germany were merged into the Aero Club of Germany and German Air Sport Association in 1933, the latter body came to an arrangement with the Hitler Youth Organization, whereby it undertook to train its members. First a preliminary period for boys between ten and fourteen years of age

¹ Aeroplanes' cartographers. The word is built up from *Ort*, meaning a place. Thus one who finds and maps a place. It will be seen that such a duty is identical with an air observer.

278 GÖRING, THE IRON MAN OF GERMANY

was arranged, which covered map-reading, cycling and motor cycling at night, to strengthen their nerve-control, and the identification of German and foreign aircraft from drawings and models. The second period was for those youths over fourteen, and here the real flying instruction began, together with workshop practice. Gliding was always insisted upon before any member was allowed to learn to fly powered aircraft. On qualifying for wings they were then entered as members of the N.S.F.K. (*National Sozialistisches Flieger Korps*). This practice is now continued in the present organization of aviation in Germany, and from this solid body of semi-trained material the German military air force is recruited.

From this beginning, of some ordered state of flying, units were linked together in collaboration with the German Air Defence Union, and regular practice night air attacks took place all over Germany. All organizations were banded together in these manœuvres—and anti-aircraft spotting units began to appear, complete with high-powered searchlights and sound detectors.

Everything was being done by the German Air Minister to make the people air-raid conscious and air-minded, for he knew that, with the people behind him, he could press for, and receive, the right of Germany to possess a military air force. As events have proved, he did not ask; he merely built an air force, and then told the world that Germany owned war-machines, whether it liked or not. In 1934 Hermann Göring told English special correspondents in Berlin that he thought that Germany should be allowed between 30 to 40 per cent of the total air strength of the countries immediately surrounding her. These countries, France, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Belgium, at that time, had a total air strength (front line and reserve) of something like 8000 machines. Which meant that he had an air force up his sleeve of about 2750 machines of all types.

Because of the world's intense interest in the allegations that Germany was arming in the air, the German Air Minister was continually demanding the right to such air armament without admitting its existence. From time to time, in conversation with foreign newspaper men, he would hint at what was afoot, and he would tentatively suggest that he had a programme around certain figures (as above quoted) and it would be only fair, having regard to the peculiarly changing conditions in Europe, for the other Powers to acknowledge Germany's need for an air force of the size scheduled and then to enter into an air pact, regulating future building.

How Germany announced its military air force is now stale history; it arrived and the Powers accepted it. Its composition was so modern that every European air force had to start a rebuilding programme, for every single German machine was of the latest design and, in many cases, in performance, greatly in advance of our own.

An inspection of the German air building discloses that Göring is in favour of the reliable, heavy and not too fast, night bomber, which means that he visualizes a change in aerial warfare. The attack will be sudden and concentrated. He is working on the supposition that a bombing fleet would discharge about 450 tons of mixed explosive. The German Air Minister may be considered one of the few advocates of the use of Lewisite, which, if used on massed flights, would mean a quick end to any war, for the attacked population would suffer so terribly, in dense areas, that its Government, unable to evacuate it, would have to run up the white flag promptly.

The German Air Minister holds the view, and rightly so, that a thriving civil aviation service is a good basis on which to build an organization of attack and defence. Its pilots, flying considerable hours, night and day, over a variety of country, are admirable reserve from which to draw in time of war. The German Lufthansa has many

brilliant pilots in its service, and these would be drafted into bombing squadrons in the event of war, because the territory over which they might be called upon to discharge their deathly cargoes would be well known to them.

Consequently, directly after taking office, he carried out a strict reorganization of the commercial air service. He rebuilt airports to meet modern needs and constructed new ones in parts of the country, people complained, in which no air traffic would be required. With these new aerodromes came the planes, and the local passenger and goods traffic of the railway suffered accordingly. Internal express air services were developed and the Heinkel He. 70, and the Junkers Ju. 60, gradually superseded the old single-engine machine. Later, down to the present year, these have been improved upon in the He. 111 and the Ju. 52, 86, and Ju. 160, all ultra-modern machines, slight alteration in which would convert them into day bombers. The four-engined G. 38, capable of carrying forty passengers over long distances at speed, has already been sold to the Japanese Government, or constructed by the Japanese under licence, and has been used against the Chinese as a long-distance bomber, with the effect shown in the casualty lists appearing in the dispatches from China.

In 1933 the Aerodynamic Experimental Institute at Göttingen, and the Research Institute at Adlershof, were in a state of financial and technical decay. These institutions were subsidized immediately by Göring's Ministry, and since have contributed most of the new methods and improvements in German aviation. Unable, at the beginning, to openly rebuild the German military air service, the new Minister, by the discreet use of these commercial activities, trained the younger men who were to form the nucleus of his command. The work of the Lufthansa increased and spread across Europe down to South

America. In 1934 a seaplane mother-ship cruised midway between the African and South American coasts, and machines of the Dornier Wal type, Do. 10 T. and Do. 18, were used to carry mails between Germany and the South American States. Since that time three other mother-ships have been put into commission, the *Schwabenland*, *Friesenland*, and *Ostmark*, and now the German Lufthansa, in conjunction with the *Syndicate Condor* of Rio de Janeiro, operates a twice-weekly service each way between Germany and South America to the Pacific coast. Very shortly it is intended to place in service several large Focke-Wulf 200 and Ha. 139 Junker heavy-oil, four-engined planes, carrying forty passengers and mails, on this route and on the North Atlantic service to the United States. Night flying has become regular in the service, and no serious accident has yet occurred, which speaks highly of the machines and the men.

During recent years the German Lufthansa has organized the internal air routes of China, and the company called 'Eurasia' is owned by the Deutsche Chinesische Lufthansa. Plans are in hand for a regular service between Berlin and Chinese terminal airports, but at the moment all work is held up by the opposition of the Soviet Government, which is not anxious to grant permission for German planes to fly over its territory *en route* to China.

Year by year the passenger-carrying capacity and the goods load of the machines of the Lufthansa have increased considerably and the carriage of mails over, and through, foreign countries has caused annoyance to the air-transport companies of other European States. The railway company (State controlled) has entered into a collaboration with the Lufthansa and heavy-cargo planes drone through the night from Hamburg to Cologne and from Leipzig to Berlin.

Without going deeply into Germany's aviation (which is not proper to the scope of our discussion), it can be stated, definitely, that the work of the Lufthansa, giving admirable service as it does to the commercial life of Germany, is in no way economic. No figures are issued, but it is self-evident, from observation, that the service rendered by this air-transport undertaking could not be carried out without heavy subsidies from the Treasury, after due allocation in the Air Ministry Budget. In fact, one can go further and say that the German commercial air services are operated regardless of the economic return on the capital employed.

Under the driving-power of the energetic German Air Minister, the aircraft industry has thrived beyond all pre-1933 expectations. Every old aeroplane factory has been reopened, new works planned and put into production, and even some of their engines have had to be imported from England and America. The old Gotha body-building works again resound to the hum of machines, and the works of Junker, Heinkel, Focke-Wulf, and Dornier are concentrating on new fast machines fitted with heavy-oil-driven engines. This type of engine, which is being introduced as far as possible, has a double advantage over the petrol engine. The danger of fire is reduced to a minimum and a weight of oil equal to a weight in petrol will increase its range of operation by 50 per cent.

Nearly every German aircraft company has its foreign subsidiary concern in Sweden, Japan, Switzerland, and Czechoslovakia; while French, American, and British-producing companies are operating German engine or body-design patents under licence. This gives the German Government the advantage of foreign exchange and keeps it, through the experts employed in these foreign factories, abreast of all improvements in design and performance.

While the German and British publics are being told that each may, one day, expect to be bombed out of existence by the air force of the other, a pretty hash is being prepared. The Rolls-Royce 'Kestrel' engine and the Armstrong-Siddeley 'Jaguar' engines are being sold to the German air service, while British naval seaplanes are being built under licence, in England, on Heinkel patents. The Dutch Fokker factory sells the identical bomber to Germany that it has just delivered to Czechoslovakia. During the last phase of the Great War, German aircraft production capacity was 2400 machines and about 3750 aero-engines per month, and, because of the factors introduced during the past four years, it can be asserted quite reasonably, that, with improved conditions and new and more rapid engineering machinery, this production standard could be surpassed should the industry have to be placed on a war footing.

Perhaps the most interesting personality around Field-Marshal Göring in the German Air Ministry is Major-General Bodenschatz. He means nothing to the British public, but to Göring he has proved himself the most loyal of friends. He was the last adjutant of the Richt-hofen squadron and was a member of the little group in the Stiftskeller in Aschaffenburg so many years ago. During the days of exile, in Austria, he was one of the couriers who risked his neck in the mountains to deliver messages between Munich and Innsbruck. He was always in the family circle afterwards, in Berlin. Side by side, he has stood with Göring, and now he has received the reward which previously only the Emperor could give.

The German Air Ministry keeps a fatherly eye on airship construction, and Hermann Göring is the President of the Zeppelin Airship Company. He fulminates against the American decree which will not allow Germany to purchase helium for her airships, and even after the

terrible disaster at Lakehurst to the largest dirigible yet built, the *Hindenburg*, he was not set down. He ordered forthwith the speeding-up of construction of a new ship which was being built at Friedrichshafen and ordered it to be named the *Ersatz Hindenburg*.

At one time the Germans attached great importance to Zeppelins as cargo-carriers within the Reich, but this section of German aviation appears at the moment under a cloud. The Lakehurst disaster broke the faith of many believers in the lighter-than-air means of air transport, and its effect on public opinion was much the same as on English minds at the time of the R101 crash.

Many fairy-tales have been told about the gigantic German Air Fleet, its underground aerodromes, in which are stored thousands of aircraft, and its new weapons of frightfulness, but it is quite possible that many foreigners who have 'secured' such startling evidence have had the information deliberately placed in their way, a trick not new to the military intelligence services of every country and, indeed, a favourite weapon of counter-espionage. That Germany has a powerful war fleet there is no doubt, but its battle strength is probably no greater than Britain's. The personnel has not the training of the R.A.F., and the accident roll is heavier than our own. The machines are good, but not better, than British machines. The British Air Force has an advantage over the German inasmuch as it has a longer continuous record, which is bound to make for superiority in its comparative efficiency. Our pilots have been flying military machines under war conditions, whereas the German pilots, even admitting the secret arming and training of the past ten years, have not had the advantage of those years of cohesion.

The factor which will compensate for these natural, but admittedly technical, drawbacks will prove to be tradition.

While our Balls, Browns, Leeft-Robinsons, and Bishops are now forgotten names to most, the Richthofens, Immelmanns, Boelkes, Loerzers, Udets, and Görings' exploits are kept evergreen in the minds of the German people, and particularly in the messes of the new race of German flyers.

The senior fighting squadron of the German Air Force is the Richthofen squadron ; the last commander of the original squadron is the supreme head of the service. No greater combination could appeal to the minds of a young set of dare-devils, as airmen of all countries are.

• While other countries have been debating the cost of air defence in all its branches, while they have been sending each other diplomatic notes and discussing academic non-intervention in countries about which the average man cares not a fig, the German eagle has been spreading its wings and now flies freely about its own lands and its fledgelings have found homes in South America and China. Perhaps one day it may have a nest in the hills of Spain.

The writer has given a fairly comprehensive picture of Hermann Göring and has endeavoured to show to what account his immense energy has been put and what has been built up in so short a space of time under economic difficulties. Admittedly, had it not been for the collaboration of the German people, he would hardly have been able to have achieved any one of these things, and it sets one to think how and why a whole people follow a handful of men like the present leaders in Germany.

But, in thinking, one must not forget that the German Nation had been cheated by their last Emperor and by many of the latter leaders of the post-war period.

None of them looked for a real collaboration from the people : to them the people was just an inchoate mass to

be used only in the case of elections or war. Germany has never had leaders so near to the people as are the present men, and the people have never had such a good run for their money as they are having now.

Whether we like it or not, during the next few months we may expect a number of incidents over which our Press will carry columns of stories and which the Houses of Parliament will debate without conclusion, but this will not prevent Germany from carrying through its set plans. For two men really control the destinies of the German people; they are as determined in crowning their work as they were in seizing the leadership. One of them is a man firm in the conviction that his policy is right and who will just stick to it because it is a plan that he himself has made. The other, Göring, will plunge headlong into the future because his leader has told him to bring his plans to their ultimate conclusion. Among several other reasons, not the smallest is that this man, Göring, worships his country with a passion seldom seen in these prosaic days, and he will do or dare anything that he thinks is for the good of his beloved Germany. He will not be baulked by treaties, pacts or laws or by the foreign Press, nor, for that matter, by the foreign Powers themselves.

We can expect no rest from the German scene until every German-speaking land has ceased to exist as a foreign interest in the German *Lebensraum*. It is laid down in the Nazi bible that all German-speaking lands shall come into the Greater Reich, and until this is achieved Hermann Göring will pursue his course like the obstinate Prussian that he is.

INDEX

A

- Armistice, November 1918, 55
- Aschaffenburg, 57, 179, 283
- Aviation, growth of, under N.S.D.A.P., 143
- Alvensleben, Count von, 168
- Association of German Industry, 177
- Anomaly of State Governments, 202
- Aviation, enormous expansion of civil, from 1933, 214
- Assimilation of all flying clubs, 215
- Air Defence Union, inauguration of, 216
- Air protection schools, 221
- Alleged air attack on Berlin, 224
- Aero engines from England, 225
- Anti-Jewish outbreaks in Poland, 234
- Annexation of Austria, 246
- Air Minister, work of Göring as, 275 *et seq.*

B

- Beaumont, assault on, 41
- Ball (British airman), 48
- Boelke, 48
- Brown, Captain A. R., 52
- Beamish, Huldine, mother of Carin Göring, 69, 139
- Berlichingen, Götz von, 23, 70
- Brüning, Heinrich, Chancellor of the Reich, 127
 - Attempts conciliation with Göring, 133
 - Takes dictatorial powers by decree, 138
 - 'Germany cannot pay' notice, 138

- Repudiated by Hindenburg, 139
- Harassed by Göring in Reichstag, 146
- Asks for *Burgfrieden*, 147
- Dismissed by Hindenburg, 157
- Bavaria bans Brownshirts, 160
- Bavaria, Duke Ludwig of, 114
- Blomberg, Field-Marshal von, 181, 241
- Betrayal of Democracy by Christian Trade Unions, 184
- 'Black, White, and Red' front, 187
- Brunswick Stahlhelm revolt, 201
- Boycott of Jewish tradesmen, 205
- Bodenschatz, Major-General, 276, 283
- Bomber-building plans, 279

C

- Cambrai, 44
- Chemin des Dames, 52
- Communism, growth of, in Republican Germany, 145
- Continual breach of Nazis with Nationalists, 168
- Cuno, Dr. Wilhelm, 172
- Comic relief in Reichstag, 172
- Coburg, Duke of, 177
- Conspiracy between Von Schleicher, Trade Unions, and Reichswehr elements, 179
- Criminal police, reorganization of, 185
- Church, paradox of German, 199
- 'Cold' pogrom of Jews, 205
- Christiansen, Captain (famous Zeppelin pilot), 215
- Controller of the German Hunt, 248 *et seq.*
- Controller of the German State Theatres, 248 *et seq.*

Commissarius Loci :

Michael Christian Göring

Hermann Göring, 266 *et seq.*Confiscation of Jewish capital,
threatened, 272Comparison of German and British
air efficiency, 284 *et seq.*

D

Dawes Plan, 103

Dawes Loan, attack on, in Reichs-
tag, 121Disturbing influence of increased
Nazi representation in
Reichstag, 127

Darmstaedter Bank crash, 137

Dresdener Bank weakening, 137

Düsterberg, Colonel, 149

Dommes, General, 168

Die Sirene, 219Disarmament Conference, Ger-
many withdraws from, 232

E

Ebert, first President of Weimar
Republic, 63, 87, 113

Engels, Friedrich, 64

Ehrhardt, Captain, 75

'Ehrhardt, Brigade,' 75, 86

Economic reason for middle-class
membership N.S.D.A.P.,
126

Epp, General von, 114, 192

Ernst, Karl, 195, 229, 242

Enabling Act, 198

Economic boycott of Jews, 205

F

Fokker, Antoine Hermann, 44

Fock, Baron Karl von, father of
Carin Göring, 69Fock, von, history of family, 69 *et
seq.*, 110*Femgericht*, 75

Feder, Gottfried, 79, 146

Flight from the mark, 137

Foundation of 'Harzburger Front,'
138

Frick, Dr. Wilhelm, 165, 180, 248

Failure of Trade Unions to obstruct
Nazis, 184Four-Year Plan, 244, 266 *et seq.*

Furtwängler, 261

G

Göring, Hermann :

Birth and boyhood, 23

Mountain escapades, 25 *et seq.*

Joins Cadet Corps, 27

Emperor's commendation, 28

Commission to 112th Infantry
Regiment, 28

Mobilization, 1914, 28

First German officer to contact
French, 31

At battle of Mülhausen, 32

Most peculiar personal war
experience, 33Joins air service of own accord,
37

First decoration on the field, 39

First German airman to use
machine-gun, 43

Becomes pilot, 44

War incidents, 45 *et seq.*Succeeds to command Richt-
hofen Circus, 54

Armistice oath, 56

Demobilization, 57

Conflict with War Minister, 60

Appeal to Officers Association to
overthrow Republicanism,
61Service with Swedish Com-
mercial Airways, 1919, 66

Meeting with first wife, Carin, 67

Marriage to Carin at Munich, 73

Meeting with Adolf Hitler, 1922,
76Appointed first leader S.A.,
1923, 82Munich 'Putsch,' November
1923, 91Wounded and in exile, 92 *et seq.*

Sojourn in Italy, 104

Meetings with Mussolini, 106

- Life in Sweden, 1925, 108 *et seq.*
 Amnestied, 110
 Return to Germany, 1926, 111
 Leader of National Socialism in Prussia, 112
 Elected to Reichstag, 119
 Attack on Dawes Plan, 121
 Political deputy of Hitler in Reichstag, 128
 Conflict with Brüning, 133
 First meeting with Hindenburg, 140
 Death of Carin Göring, 141
 President of the Reichstag, 163
 Dismisses von Papen's Government in red portfolio trick, 166
 Reichs Minister in first Nazi Government, 1933, 180
 Commissioner for Air, 180
 Minister of the Interior for Prussia, 180
 Purge of Prussia, 182 *et seq.*
 Attack on Jews, 187
 Mission to Rome, April 1933, 210
 Prime Minister of Prussia, 211
 Inauguration of German Air Defence Union, 216
 Promotion to General, 231
 Reinterment of Carin Göring in
 • Schorfheide, 239
 Purge of 30 June 1934, 241
 As Hitler's *alter ego* from death of Hindenburg, 243
 Commissioner of Four Year Plan, 244
 Promoted Field-Marshal, 1938, 246
 Record of work in office as :
 Prime Minister of Prussia
 Master of the German Forests
 Master of the German Hunt
 Controller of the German Theatres
 Commissioner of the Four Year Plan
 Minister for Air, 248 *et seq.*
 Patron of the Arts, 264
 Göring, Carin (*née* von Fock), 67, 73 *et seq.*
 Death of, 141
 Reinterment of, 239
 Goebbels, Joseph, 111, 127, 130, 169, 174, 204 *et seq.*
 General strike supported by Göring and Goebbels, 169
 Gestapo, 189 *et seq.*, 204
 German-Polish pact of non-aggression, 234
 German Officers Society, scene at rally, 1918, 59
 Gröner, General Wilhelm, 133, 139, 156
 Gereke, Günther, 198
Gleichschaltung, gleichgeschaltet, 202
 Gronau, Wolfgang von, 215
 Grimme, General (President *RLB*), 219
 Guelph treasures, 263

 H
 Hitler, Adolf, 13, 75 *et seq.*
 Chancellor, 180
 Führer, 243
 Hohenzollern :
 Historical, 18 *et seq.*, 62, 119
 Wilhelm II, 20, 119
 Crown Prince Wilhelm, 39, 119
 Prince August Wilhelm, 119, 124
 Prince Eitel Friedrich, 119
 Hindenburg, Field-Marshal Paul von, 61
 President of Weimar republic, 71, 113, 122
 First meeting with Hitler and Göring, 139
 Dissembling with Brüning, 147
 Prepares to retire, 149
 Re-elected President, 153
 Dismisses Brüning, 157
 Appoints von Papen Chancellor, 158
 Refuses office to Nazis, 160
 Offers Hitler Vice-Chancellorship, 162
 Again calls Hitler to conference, 170
 Cannot answer to his oath, 172
 Continual conferences with Göring, 174
 Appoints Hitler Chancellor, 180
 Telegraphs congratulations to

Hitler and Göring on blood bath, 241
 Death, 243
 Heeringer, Josias von, 32
 Höppner, General von, 51
 Hanfstaengl, Ernst, 85
 Heavy Industry finances Nazis, 116
 Hugenberg, Alfred, 130
 Alliance of Nazis with, 138, 149, 169
 'Harzburger Front' founded, 138, 149
 Hölderlin, Friedrich, 166
 'Hib Action', 167
 Himmler, Heinrich, 174, 241
 Höltermann, Carl, 178
 Heines, Edmund, 195, 229, 242
 Hesse, Prince Philip of, 210
 Hesse, Grand Duke of, 210

I

Immelmann, 48
 Intrigues in Reichswehr, 132 *et seq.*
 Industrialists retrench on subscriptions to N.S.D.A.P., 174
 Installation of Hitler regime at Potsdam, 191
 Innsbruck, Göring in, 94 *et seq.*
 Increase in Nazi membership, 124
 Industrial chaos, 125
 Introduction of conscription, 244

J

Jews, commencement of serious attacks upon, 145
 Flight of, with capital, 146
 Jewish Press suppressed, 181
 Jewish problem reaching a head, 205
 Jewish boycott, 204 *et seq.*
 Jewish exodus from Germany, 230
 Jews, non-German, rush to acquire frozen mark balances, 234
 Jannings, Emil, 261

K

Kemmel Ridge, battle of, 52
 Kantzow, Carin von (*née* Fock), later Carin Göring, 67 *et seq.*

Kahr, von, 85 *et seq.*, 240, 242
 Knilling, von, 91
 Kantzow, Thomas von, 127
 Kaass (Centre party), 169

L

Loerzer, Bruno, 28, 35, 38 *et seq.*, 45, 112, 143, 214, 276
 Liebknecht, Karl, 62
 Ludendorff, General von, 87 *et seq.*, 101
 Lossow, von, 88 *et seq.*
 Luther, Dr. Hans, 133
 Luftschutzschulen, 221
 Land police, organization of, 231
 League of Nations, Germany withdraws from, 232
 Lufthansa, expansion of, 279
 To South America, 281
 In China, 281

M

Mülhausen, battle of, 32, 48
 McCudden, British pilot, 48
 Munich 'Putsch,' 90 *et seq.*
Morning Post, 113
 Müller, Socialist Chancellor, 122
 Mussolini, Benito, 106
 Göring and von Papen visit, 210, 251
 Master of the German Forests, 248 *et seq.*
 Master of the German Hunt, 248 *et seq.*
 Milch, General of the Air Force, 251

N

National Socialist Workers' Party, N.S.D.A.P., 76 *et seq.*
 Prohibition of, 104
 North German Wool scandal, 137
 Nazi vote, accretion to, from Communists, 150
 Nazis sweep polls, 160

Nazi party, bankruptcy of, 160
 National Socialist party split, 175
 National Socialist Flying Corps,
 277

O

Odeon Platz, Munich, 92
 Orgy of spending and loans by
 Reichs Government, 1924,
 107
 Open revolt in Nazi party, 131
 Oberföhrn, Ernst, 200

P

Pau, General Paul, attempted
 capture of, 34
Pour le mérite, award of, 53
 Prussia, Nazism takes root in,
 112
 Potsdam, Göring return to Reichs-
 tag as member for, 119
 Prætorian Guard (S.S.) founded
 for protection of Hitler,
 Göring, and Goebbels, 132
 Papen, Franz von, 157
 Appointed Chancellor, 158
 Suspends Government of
 Prussia, 159
 Attacked by Göring for Lau-
 sanne, 159
 Repeals ban on S.A. after threat
 by Göring, 159
 Fooled by Göring on dissolution,
 164
 Visit to Vatican, 210
 Escape from blood bath, 30 June
 1934, 242
 Ambassador to Vienna, 242
 Purge of Nazi headquarters prior
 to taking office, 176
 Prussia, Göring Statthalter of, 183
 Pope, Göring and von Papen's
 mission to, 210
 Pact of Paris, 222
 Pact with Poland, 234
 Purge of 30 June 1934, 241
 Prime Minister of Prussia, Göring
 made, 248

R

Richthofen, Manfred von, 48, 51,
 215
 Death of, April 1918, 52
 Reinhardt, Captain, 53, 54
 Reinhardt, General, first Re-
 publican War Minister 59
 Rosen, Count Eric, 66
 Rockelstad Castle, 66
 Röhm, Ernst, 75, 86, 143, 195,
 227 *et seq.*, 240, 242
Reichskriegsflagge, 75, 86, 228
Rapprochement between Nazis and
 Nationalists, 177
Reichsbanner, 178
 Rottach, Prince Guido Henckel-
 Donnersmarck of, 114
 Reichstag, dissolution of last
 democratic, 183
 Reorganization of criminal police,
 185
 Revolt of Stahlhelm in Brunswick,
 201
Reichsluftschutzbund, 216
 Rhineland, occupation of, 244
 Reichswerke Hermann Göring
 A.G., 272

S

Saussheim, attack on, 33
 Spartakist League, 62
 Seldte, Franz, 74, 122, 200, 212
 Stahlhelm (Steel Helmets), 75,
 122 *et seq.*
 S.A. Sturm Abteilungen, founda-
 tion of, 82 *et seq.*
 Schlageter, Leo, 84
 Stinnes, Hugo, 84
 Seeckt, General Hans von, 87
 Seisser (Bavarian Police Chief), 89
et seq.
 Schellshorn (Göring's chauffeur) 98
 Strasser, Gregor, 111, 146, 170,
 173 *et seq.*
 Stresemann, Gustav, 123
 Schacht, Hjalmar, 133, 195 *et seq.*
 Strasser, Otto, 146, 173, 176
 Strasser, faction's defection, com-
 mencement of, 146

Schleicher, General Kurt von, 156,
167, 170, 173, 174, 179 *et*
seq., 242
Spreti, Count, 168
Schröder, Baron von (negotiations
for Hitler regime), 175
Steel Syndicate's contribution, 177
Statthalter, introduction of, 203
Streicher, Julius, 204
Simon, Sir John, 232, 244
Saar becomes German, 244
Sudeten Germans, 247
Sonnemann, Emmy, 262
Self-sufficiency campaign, 269
Synthetic goods, 270 *et seq.*

T

Trenchard, General Hugh, 47
Thyssen, Fritz, 84, 132
Trial of Munich 'Putsch'
prisoners, 100 *et seq.*
Torgler, Ernst, 165
Threat of Communism brings
about Nazi Government,
175
Trade Unions' betrayal of German
Democracy, 184
Tempelhof airport, 211
Tempelhofer Feld, 228, 242
Threatened confiscation of Jewish
capital, 272
Types of German planes in service,
280 *et seq.*

U

Udet, Ernst, 48, 143, 214, 276
Uniforms, proscription of, in
Prussia, 134

V

Vatican, Göring and von Papen
visit to, 210

W

Wittelsbach, 79, 86, 91, 184, 192
Wall Street crash, effect of, on
German economy, 129
Wagener, Dr. Otto, 227
Weid, Prince Victor zu, 238
Wecke, Police General, 238, 241
Windsor, Duke of, 251

Y

Young Plan, 122

Z

Zedkin, Klara, 163
Zeppelin Airship Company, 283

